LESSONS

in the

Small Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther.

For the Senior Department of Lutheran Sunday-Schools and for General Use.

By

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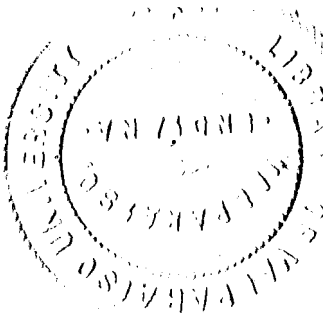

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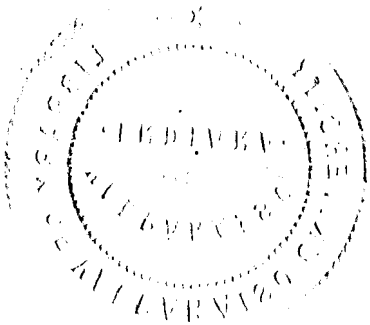

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LESSON 1.

The Catechism and the Bible.

1. The little book we have before us is called the *Small Catechism.* The word "catechism" means *instruction.* This little book gives us instruction in a brief and simple form, such as even a child can understand. It teaches us what every Christian, as a child of God, should believe, and how every Christian, as a child of God, should live. — This book is called the *Small Catechism* not only because it is a small book, but mainly because we have also a *Large Catechism* for older people.

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2. The *Small Catechism* was written by *Dr. Martin Luther, the great Reformer of the Church.* Luther was born at Eisleben, a small town in Germany, November 10, 1483, and died at the same place, February 18, 1546. He published his *Small Catechism in the year 1529,* for the benefit of the common people and the children, who are most in need of such instruction.

3. Our Catechism is a small book, indeed, but it is a most precious little book. It does not contain Luther's thoughts and doctrines or those of any other wise and learned man; it contains *God's own words* revealed to us for our salvation. It does not teach us *all* the doctrines of God's Word, but those that every Christian must know in order *to believe rightly, to lead a godly life, and, when his last hour is come, to depart in peace.* Our Catechism teaches these doctrines in a short form, in plain and simple words.

4. *Our Catechism teaches God's Word.* How do we prove this? Luther has taken the contents of his Catechism from the Bible, and the Bible is the Word of God. — The Word "Bible" means *book.* We call our Bible "the book" because it really is the Book of books, the book in comparison with

which no other book is worthy to be called by that name, the most important and valuable book. — The Bible is also called *the Scriptures,* or *Scripture,* which means something written, a written word. The Bible was written by *holy men of God.* These holy men did not write the Bible of their own will. *"Holy men of God spake"* (and wrote) *"as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."* 2 Pet. 1, 21. God Himself moved His holy men to write the Bible.

5. The Bible contains many *different books,* written at different times. We divide the books of our Bible into *two chief parts.* The first we call the *Old Testament.* To it belong all the books written by the prophets of God, by Moses, Samuel, David, Isaiah, and others, before our Savior was born. — The second part we call the *New Testament,* which contains all the books written by the evangelists and apostles, such as Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, and others, after our Savior came into this world. *Both Testaments teach us the same things and doctrines.* In what respect do they differ?

6. The Bible is the written Word of God. It is true, holy men have written the Bible, but they wrote being moved by the Holy Ghost, and, moreover, they wrote what God told them to write, they wrote by inspiration of God. *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God."* 2 Tim. 3, 16. God inspired His prophets and apostles, that is, He taught and told them what to write, He taught and gave them the very words which they were to use. When a teacher dictates to his pupils, the children, indeed, write the words; yet they do not write their own words, but the words of their teacher. In a similar manner, God, as it were, dictated His Word to the holy men; He told them what to write, and how to write it. So the whole Bible is God's Word. Therefore it is wholly *free from every error,* it is *infallible.* Everything it tells us is the truth. God will not and cannot tell us an untruth.

7. *For what purpose did God give us His Word in the Bible?* The Holy Scriptures *"are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."* 2 Tim. 3, 15. God's Word is to make us *wise,* not wise unto the

things of this world, unto our daily life and work, but *wise unto salvation.* It teaches us how we who are sinners can be saved from damnation. Nobody can teach us this but God in His Word. — Our salvation is in Christ Jesus. We are saved solely by faith in Him who has taken away the sins of the world. The Scriptures testify of Christ. — The Word of God is *able* to make us wise unto salvation. In it we find all we must know, all that is necessary to save us, to give us eternal life. *"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."* Ps. 119, 105.

8. *How should we use the Scriptures?* Our Savior says: *"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of Me."* John 5, 39. We should *search* the Scriptures, that is, we should read and study them diligently. We hear God's Word preached in our churches, we learn it in our schools, we should read it daily in our homes. We should not only read, but *study* it *with earnest prayer to God* that He would open our eyes that we may understand His Word. — We should read it so as *to seek and to find in it Christ,* our Lord and Savior, and through faith in Him have eternal life. *"Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it."* Luke 11, 28.

9. From the Word of God our Catechism is taken. Luther took the most important doctrines from the Bible for his Catechism. *It may be called a small Bible.* Gladly should we study this little book. As new-born babes long and cry for their milk and grow thereby to become strong men or women, so children of God, newly born in Holy Baptism, should desire the pure milk of the Word set before them in their Catechism and grow thereby in knowledge and faith unto salvation. 1 Pet. 2, 2.

REMEMBER: —

The Bible is the Word of God, written by inspiration of the Holy Ghost. God gave us His Word to make us wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

We should diligently search the Scriptures to find in them Christ, our Savior, and in Him everlasting life.

MEMORIZE: —

And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God. 2 Tim. 3, 15. 16.

Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of Me. John 5, 39.

Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it. Luke 11, 28.

QUESTIONS.

1. What does the word "catechism" mean? 2. What does the Catechism teach us? 3. By whom was our Catechism written? 4. Who was Dr. Martin Luther? 5. When was our Catechism published? 6. From what other book are the doctrines of our Catechism taken? 7. What does the word "Bible" mean? 8. Why do we call this book the Bible? 9. How is the Bible also called? 10. By whom was the Bible, or Holy Scripture, written? Whose word is the Bible? 11. How is the Bible God's Word, though it was written by men? 12. What are the chief parts of the Scriptures? 13. Of whom do both parts testify? 14. In what respect do they differ? 15. For what purpose did God give us His Word? 16. Unto what does the Bible make wise? 17. How do we obtain salvation? 18. How should we use the Bible? 19. What does the Psalmist say about God's Word? 20. Why should we also diligently learn our Catechism?

LESSON 2.

The First Commandment.

Which is the First Commandment?

Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

What does this mean?

We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.

1. We all have been baptized. In Holy Baptism God has received us as His children. *God is our heavenly Father.* A father gives his children his commands. He tells them what they should do and not do, how they should live to

please him. So our heavenly Father has given us, His children, His *commandments.* He tells us what, according to His will, we should do and not do, how we should live and walk in His sight. As His obedient children we will gladly hear and learn His will and try, with His gracious help, to lead such lives as will please Him. It should be our pleasure to fulfil His commandments, for they are the will of our Father, who loves us so dearly. — *The Ten Commandments are our heavenly Father's will; they tell us what we should do and not do.*

2. *"Thou shalt have no other gods before Me,"* that is the first of the Ten Commandments. That is the will of God, our Lord and Father, that we are to have no other gods before or besides Him. He who is the only true God should be *our* God. Him alone, and nobody and nothing besides Him, we are to have and regard as our God. *"I am the Lord, that is My name; and My glory will I not give to another."* Is. 42, 8. When do we regard God as our God? When is He our God indeed? Our Catechism says: *"We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things."* When we fear God, and love Him, and trust in Him above all things, then He is truly our God.

3. *"We should fear God."* A dutiful child fears his father. He certainly is not afraid of him, but he honors and respects him. In the same manner we should fear God. He says: *"I am the almighty God."* Gen. 17, 1. He has, through His mighty word, made heaven and earth. Because God is so great and mighty, we should fear Him. We should not be afraid of Him, — the almighty God is our Father, — but we should honor and respect Him above all things.

4. A child shows his fear and filial respect for his father *by not doing anything wrong,* because his dear father might see it or hear of it. He is afraid he might displease his father by disobeying him, yes, cause him grief. *God is always with us. He sees and hears everything we do or say, yea, He knows the very thoughts of our hearts.* We should always remember that He is present wherever we are, and therefore behave accordingly. We should be afraid to grieve our

heavenly Father by doing wrong. *The fear of God will keep us from doing anything against His holy will. "By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil."* Prov. 16, 6. *Think of Joseph in Egypt!* When he was tempted by Potiphar's wife, he remembered that God was with him, therefore he told her: *"How, then, can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"* Gen. 30, 9. Remember always: God is with me! and you will not do such great wickedness and sin against your God. *"I am the almighty God; walk before Me and be thou perfect."* Gen. 17, 1.

We fear God when we honor and respect Him, when we walk before Him, and for His sake keep away from sin.

5. *"We should love God."* We all love our parents. We esteem them highly, our hearts cling to them, because we know how dearly they love us, and that they are doing all they can for us. God ought to be dearer to us than everything in this world, dearer even than our parents. He is our heavenly Father, our greatest Benefactor. From Him we receive all that we have and enjoy. He loves us first, He has so loved us that He gave His dear Son for us. *So we should love Him and cling to Him with our whole heart.*

6. *"This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments."* 1 John 5, 3. If we love God, we shall gladly do as He bids us do. Thus our *Lord Jesus* loved His heavenly Father. He says: *"I will delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy Law is within My heart."* Ps. 40, 8. *Abraham* loved God, and therefore he was willing to sacrifice his only son for God's sake. Gen. 22, 1—12.

We love God when we cling to Him with our whole heart and from love to Him fulfil His commandments.

7. *"We should trust in God."* To trust in God means to put our confidence in God and His promises, to be assured that He will give us what we need and what is good for us in this life and in the life to come. We trust in God when we believe that He will not forsake us in the day of trouble, that whatever He sends us, though it seem evil, will be for our good. Our Father can and will give us only good and perfect gifts. Thus *David* trusted in the Lord when he went

forth to conquer Goliath. 1 Sam. 17. Thus, too, *those three men* trusted in God who suffered themselves to be cast into the fiery furnace rather than deny their God. Dan. 3.

We trust in God when we put our confidence in Him and firmly believe that He will give us all we need, that He will never forsake us, and that everything which He sends us will be for our welfare.

8. "We should fear and love God and trust in Him *"above all things,"* that is, more than in all other men or things. We may, and we really do, fear and love many things besides God. We fear and love our parents, our teachers, our friends, and we trust in them. God Himself bids us do so. For God's sake we fear and love them. But we must fear and love *God* more than all other things, more than even our parents, or our dearest friends. *He must be first in our heart and in our life.* If our parents, or friends, or anything else would separate us from God, or prevent us from fearing and loving Him, or from trusting in Him above all things, we must cast them aside. If we fear and love and trust in anything more than in God, we make a creature our god; then we have other gods besides God; then we are worshiping idols (other gods that are no gods), as the heathen do. *"Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."* Matt. 4, 10.

9. Fear, love, and trust God demands from us. Fear, love, and trust are to be found in the heart. *God claims our hearts in this commandment. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart."* Prov. 3, 5. Together with our hearts God wants our whole lives, all we are and have. *The First Commandment is the greatest of them all.* In this all the others are included. Let us daily pray God to grant us His grace to fear and love Him and trust in Him above all things, in order that we may have no other gods before Him.

REMEMBER: —

1. We should fear and love God and trust in Him above all things; then we shall have no other gods before Him; then He, the true God, will be our God indeed.

2. We should fear and love and trust in God above all things. God wants our whole heart and life, all that we are and have.

MEMORIZE: —

I am the almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect. Gen. 17, 1.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart. Prov. 3, 5.

Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve. Matt. 4, 10.

QUESTIONS.

1. What does God tell us in His commandments? 2. Why has God a right to give us these commandments? 3. Which is the First Commandment? 4. Who should be our God? 5. When is the only true God our God? 6. What does it mean to fear God? 7. How do we show that we fear God? 8. What does the Lord say Gen. 17, 1? 9. What does it mean to love God? 10. What shall we fulfil if we love God? 11. What does it mean to trust in God? 12. What shall we firmly believe if we trust in God? 13. How should we fear and love God and trust in Him? 14. Why should we fear and love God above all things? 15. What sin do we commit if we fear and love any one more than God? 16. What does our Lord say Matt. 4, 10? 17. What does God demand of us in the First Commandment? 18. Why is the First Commandment the greatest of all?

LESSON 3.

The Second Commandment.

Which is the Second Commandment?

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not curse, swear, use witchcraft, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.

1. We learned in the First Commandment that we should *fear and love our God above all things.* That is the will of our Father in heaven. If we fear and love God, we shall gladly fulfil His commandments and do His will. And it is

only if we fear and love God that we shall do so. All our obedience to God and His commandments must come from a heart that fears and loves God. In every commandment our God demands again that we fear and love Him. Therefore our Catechism begins the explanation of every commandment with these words: *"We should fear and love God."*

2. *"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain."* Because we fear and love God, we must not take His name in vain. God has a name, just as you and everybody has a name by which he is known and called; indeed, God has many names. You already learned several of His names. *(God, Lord, Father, Jesus Christ, Holy Ghost, the Almighty, Creator, Savior,* etc.) These names God has given Himself in His Word. Through His names He shows us who and what He is, what He has done and still is doing for His children. God is called Savior, and He really is the Savior; He is called Creator because He has created heaven and earth; He is called the Almighty, for with Him nothing is impossible. *God's name is God Himself as He has revealed Himself to us.*

3. *We are not to take God's name in vain.* To take God's name in vain means to use His holy name *thoughtlessly* and *without any need.* Many persons, it is sad to say, very often use the name of God, and especially that of Jesus Christ, in their speech without thinking of their Savior, without even knowing that they do so. They use it even when they talk of vile things. They take God's name in vain and mock God. *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked."* Gal. 6, 7.

4. Our Catechism shows us more plainly how God's name is taken in vain: *"We should fear and love God that we may not curse, swear, use witchcraft, lie, or deceive by His name."* We should not *curse.* To curse by God's name means *to call down upon oneself or another God's punishment. Peter* cursed. Matt. 26, 74. He said God should punish him if he knew "the man" Jesus. Christians should never curse. They bless and praise God, their Father; how, then, can they curse their fellow-men and wish them God's punishment? Blessing and cursing should not come out of the same mouth. Jas. 3, 9. 10.

5. *We should not swear by God's name.* We swear when we use God's name to affirm the truth of what we say, as we hear it done so often in daily life. Our Lord says to His disciples: *"I say unto you, Swear not at all. . . . But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."* Matt. 5, 34, 37.

6. *We should not use witchcraft by God's name.* We use witchcraft when we try to perform things which by natural means we cannot do, such as *fortune-telling, calling and asking the dead* (as the Spiritualists claim to do), etc. Such works are in themselves grievous sins, works of the devil. But such sins are much greater when God's holy name is used in performing them. Christians should have nothing to do with these works of darkness, these works of the devil. (Read Deut. 18, 10—12.)

7. *We should not lie or deceive by God's name.* Lying by God's name means telling a lie and using God's name and Word in order to make the lie seem to be the truth. So the *false prophets* use God's name and Word in order to hide their false doctrines and make them appear as God's truth. *"Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues and say, He saith."* Jer. 23, 31. The *hypocrites deceive* by God's name. They use God's name, they talk about God and His Word in order to hide their evil life. *"Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven."* Matt. 7, 21. Think of Ananias and Sapphira. Acts 5.

8. To take God's name in vain is a *grievous sin.* God is greatly displeased with it. How can we, who fear and love God, grieve Him by taking His holy name in vain? *And God has threatened to punish all that misuse His name. "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."* Ex. 20, 7.

9. God has revealed His name to us in order to *bless and save us.* He wants us to *use* His holy name *in the right way. "We should call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks."* That is the right use of our Lord's name. —

He wants us to *call* on Him, to beg for His help, especially in all our troubles; for He alone can help us in all our needs. God says: *"Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."* Ps. 50, 15. — We should *pray* in His name; for in every true prayer we use His name aright. He wants us to come to Him daily and speak with Him, as a child speaks to his father. — We should use His name in *praising* and *thanking* Him for His manifold goodness, for all His benefits, all the great things He does for us. If He has delivered or helped us, we should glorify Him. *"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name."* Ps. 103, 1. *"O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good; because His mercy endureth forever."* Ps. 118, 1. If we rightly use the name of our God, we shall be blessed by it. *"The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe."* Prov. 18, 10.

REMEMBER: —

1. God has given us His holy name that we may be blessed and saved by it.

2. He forbids us to take in vain and misuse His sacred name by cursing, swearing, using witchcraft, lying, or deceiving, or by thoughtlessly speaking it.

3. He commands us to use it aright by calling upon it in all our needs, by praying, praising, and giving of thanks. We should fear and love God and so use His blessed name.

MEMORIZE: —

I say unto you, Swear not at all, but let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Matt. 5, 34. 37.

Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues and say, He saith. Jer. 23, 31.

Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me. Ps. 50, 15.

Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Ps. 103, 1.

QUESTIONS.

1. How does our Catechism begin the explanation of every commandment after the First Commandment? 2. When only can and will we fulfil all the commandments? 3. What, therefore, does God demand of us in every commandment? 4. Enumerate some of God's holy names. 5. For what purpose has God revealed His name to us? 6. What does it mean to take God's name in vain? 7. What does it mean to curse by God's name? 8. When do we swear by God's name? 9. Whose work is witchcraft? 10. What people lie by God's name? 11. What does God say about the false prophets? (Jer. 23, 31.) 12. What does it mean to deceive by God's name? 13. What has God threatened those who take His name in vain? 14. What is the will of God with respect to His name? 15. How should we use God's name? 16. What does it mean to call upon God? 17. When especially should we do so? 18. Recite Ps. 50, 15. 19. Why should we praise the Lord and give thanks unto His name? 20. Recite Ps. 103, 1.

LESSON 4.

The Third Commandment.

Which is the Third Commandment?

Thou shalt sanctify the holy-day.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred, and gladly hear and learn it.

1. *"Thou shalt sanctify the holy-day,"* that is the Third Commandment. We Christians have a *holy-day.* We celebrate as our holy-day the first day in the week, Sunday. We do not do this because God has commanded us to keep this day or any other day holy, more sacred than the rest of the week. In the Old Testament, before Christ came into the world, God had given His people a certain day as a holy-day, the seventh day of the week, the *Sabbath.* In the New Testament, after Christ was born, God has given no such com-

mandment. *The Church, the Christians themselves,* has chosen a holy-day. The Church chose Sunday, because it was on a Sunday that our dear Lord, our Savior and our King, arose again from the dead. Every Sunday should remind us of the resurrection of our Savior, of His victory over sin, death, and the power of the devil. — We also keep other days holy, for instance, Christmas, New Year's Day, Easter, and other festival days. Can you name some other Christian festival?

2. *Why do we Christians celebrate certain days as holy-days though God has not commanded us to do so?* It is God's will that His children should come together for services of *preaching and hearing His Word,* that they should come together in their churches for public worship. In order to do this, it is necessary to set aside a *certain day.* That is the reason why the Church celebrates Sunday and other feasts. *We celebrate them not by divine command, but in order to have time for public worship,* for going to church, for services of preaching and hearing the Word of God. To the question, "What does this mean?" namely, to sanctify the holy-day, our Catechism rightly answers: *"We should fear and love God that we may not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred, and gladly hear and learn it."*

3. *We should not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred,* that is the will of God according to the Third Commandment. Remember, it is *His* Word, the holy Word of our *heavenly Father,* whom we should fear and love. It is God Himself who speaks to us in His Word, in the Bible, when we read it. It is God Himself who sends His messengers to us, our pastors and teachers, to preach His Word that we may the better understand it. Our Savior says concerning His messengers: *"He that heareth you heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent Me."* Luke 10, 16. In despising His Word, we despise our Lord, yea, our God and Father Himself. A child does not despise the words of his respected and beloved father. How deeply would we, then, offend our heavenly Father by despising His Word! — If we

really fear and love God, we shall not despise His Word, but hold it sacred. We shall not forget that we are hearing our dear Father's voice when we are reading our Bible. When God's Word is preached to us in our churches, we shall hear and receive it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the Word of God. 1 Thess. 2, 13.

4. *When is this done?* When do we not despise God's Word, but rather hold it sacred? God's Word is *preached to us in public worship.* We despise the preaching of His Word when we do not go to church at all, or only now and then, at long intervals, because we prefer to stay at home to do our work or to amuse ourselves. We despise preaching when we go to church, but hear the sermon carelessly, when we do not pay attention to the pastor. He that will not hear God's Word is not of God; such a one cannot remain God's child. John 8, 47. — If we keep the preaching of God's Word sacred, we shall go to church regularly, every Sunday, unless sickness, or something else that we cannot avoid, hinders us. We shall go to church in order to hear the sermon, to listen attentively to it. We shall hear the Word willingly and gladly and rejoice that we may again hear the dear Gospel of the love of God in Jesus Christ, our Lord. We shall rejoice and say: *"Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honor dwelleth."* Ps. 26, 8. — God's Word is also preached and taught us in our *day-schools* and *Sunday-schools.* Come to your school regularly, hear the lessons from the Word of God diligently and attentively, and you will hold His Word sacred; you will do the will of your Father.

5. God's Word is not only preached, God has also given us the *Bible, His written Word.* He wants us to read His Word in our *homes.* *"Search the Scriptures,"* John 5, 39, our Savior says. We should not only read it, but read it carefully and often, read it with prayer to God that we may more thoroughly understand it. The Word of God should dwell among us *richly, abundantly.* Col. 3, 16. If we do not read and study our Bible at home, we are despising the Word of God.

6. We should not only hear and read the Word of God, and hear and read it gladly; our Catechism also tells us *that we should learn it.* Like Mary, the mother of Jesus, *so we, too, should keep all these words and ponder them in our hearts.* Luke 2, 19. We should try with the help of our Lord to live more and more according to God's Word. *"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."* Ps. 119, 105. If we do this, we are holding God's Word sacred and shall be blessed by it. *"Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it."* Luke 11, 28. Remember *Hannah,* the mother of little Samuel, 1 Sam. 1, 2; *Mary* sitting at Jesus' feet and hearing His Word, Luke 10, 39. Remember especially how our *Lord* loved His Father's house. Luke 2, 41—52.

7. There is one thing we should not forget: to keep God's Word sacred. God sends His messengers to us, our pastors and preachers. We should *honor and esteem and love them* for their work's sake. We should *obey* them when they preach God's Word and *pray* for them. We should help that the blessed Word of God may be preached to all nations, to all men, that all may hear it and be saved by it.

8. In the First Commandment we learned that throughout our life we should fear and love God and trust in Him with our whole heart; in the Second, that we should not misuse His holy name, but use it to the praise of God and the salvation of our neighbors and ourselves; in the Third, that we should diligently hear and learn God's Word, so that all our actions, our entire life, may be ordered according to it. *These three commandments relate to God. They teach us the love of God.* Now follow the other seven, which relate to our neighbor, *whom we should love as ourselves.*

REMEMBER: —

1. We sanctify our holy-day when we fear and love God that we may not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred.

2. The fear and love of God will induce us to hear and read God's Word, not carelessly, but diligently and gladly, to learn it and to live according to it.

MEMORIZE: —

He that heareth you heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent Me. Luke 10, 16.

Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honor dwelleth. Ps. 26, 8.

Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Gal. 6, 6.

QUESTIONS.

1. Which day did God institute in the Old Testament as the holy-day of His people? 2. Did God in the New Testament give us a certain day as our holy-day? 3. Why does the Christian Church choose a holy-day, though God did not command us to do so? 4. What is God's will concerning His Word? 5. What is necessary that Christians may come together to preach and hear God's Word? 6. How do we, therefore, sanctify our holy-days? 7. Why should we not despise God's Word, but keep it sacred? 8. How do we show that we do not despise the preaching of His Word? 9. Whose voice do we hear in the sermon? 10. As whose word should we, therefore, hear and accept the sermon? 11. Where do we also hear the Word of God? 12. In which book do we find the written Word of God? 13. How should we use our Bibles, the written Word of God? 14. What does it mean to learn God's Word? 15. How must we, finally, show our love of God's Word? 16. To whom do the first three commandments relate? 17. What does the First Commandment teach us? 18. The Second? 19. The Third? 20. What is the sum of these commandments? 21. To whom do the other commandments relate? 22. How should we love our neighbor?

LESSON 5.

The Fourth Commandment.

Which is the Fourth Commandment?

Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not despise our parents and masters, nor provoke them to anger, but give them honor, serve and obey them, and hold them in love and esteem.

1. *"Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother."* God has given us a commandment in regard to our *father* and *mother*, our *parents*. This is a very important commandment for all children. It is God's will that we not only *love* our parents, but also *honor* them. We honor those who occupy a higher position than we, who have been placed above us, who have a right to command us and demand our obedience. By commanding us to honor our parents, God places them above us. He wants children to regard their parents as being in God's stead, above them, as His representatives, whom for His sake they should honor. Never forget that your dear parents have been placed over you by God. Never forget to honor and respect them for God's sake.

2. What does it mean to honor father and mother? *"We should fear and love God that we may not despise our parents . . . . nor provoke them to anger."* We should not *despise* our parents. We despise them when we do not respect the high station in which God has placed them over us, when in our hearts we do not esteem them as God's representatives, when we act as though we were their equals or even stood above them. — We should not *provoke them to anger*, that is, we should not by word or deed excite them to just anger or cause them pain and distress, by being unkind, stubborn, disobedient, even insolent towards them, or by wicked deeds and sins which dishonor them. Remember *Absalom*, who despised his father David and caused him bitter grief by rebelling against him and making himself king in his stead. 2 Sam. 15. Remember the wicked sons of Eli. 1 Sam. 2, 12. — God is displeased with this sin. *"The eye that mocketh at his father and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it,"* says the Word of God. Prov. 30, 17. God will severely punish all bad and disobedient children, very often in this life, as He did with Absalom, and if they do not repent, in eternity.

3. We must not despise our parents, but should *give them honor*, that is, we should regard them in our hearts as God's representatives; we should respect their station, even if they are lowly, or poor, or even queer. They are still our parents,

and therefore should not be deprived of their honor because of their failings. It is *God's will* that we honor them.

4. We should show in words and deeds that we honor our parents. We should *serve* them, we should do for them whatever we can, even if they do not ask for it, and do it gladly. When they become old or sick, we should do all in our power to help them, and so try to repay the love and care which they have shown us when we were young and weak and so much in need of their kindness. Your dear parents did and still do so much for you that you will hardly ever be able to repay them. *"Let them* [the children] *learn . . . to requite their parents* [to repay their love]; *for that is good and acceptable before God."* 1 Tim. 5, 4.

5. We should, furthermore, show the respect we owe our parents by *obeying them.* We should do what they tell us, carry out their commands, and do it without a murmur, willingly, quickly, fully, and gladly. In this manner you, at your age, can best prove that you honor your parents. *"Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord."* Col. 3, 20. *"Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old."* Prov. 23, 22.

6. *"We should hold them in love and esteem."* God has given us our parents as a most precious gift. Through them our heavenly Father bestows upon us numberless other gifts and blessings. Our parents provide for us; they give us all we need in this life; they shelter and protect us. They try to lead us to our Savior by teaching us the Word of God, by sending us to a Christian school. They bring us up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Eph. 6, 4. Should we not love and esteem them as a precious gift of God? Should we not thank Him with all our heart, thank Him by doing His will in regard to our parents? Do not forget: *We honor our parents because we fear and love God, who has given us this most precious gift.*

7. Our Catechism not only says that we should honor our parents, but it adds the word *"masters."* God has placed other persons besides our parents over us, in *home, school,*

and state. Our parents are also those who take our parents' place, *who take care of us and protect us* if our parents are dead or otherwise unable to take care of us. God has placed over us our *teachers* in our schools, who instruct us in our parents' stead. There are many persons in our country, in our cities and towns, who have been placed above us, such as the President of the United States, the governor of our State, the mayor of our city, etc. It is God who has placed also these rulers over us. He commands us to hold all these in honor and esteem, to serve and obey them in all things in which He has placed them over us.

8. God has added to the Fourth Commandment a *special promise: "Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise: That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."* Eph. 6, 2. 3. This shows how well-pleasing it is unto God if we keep this commandment, if we honor and love our parents and masters. Our gracious Lord will abundantly reward all children who honor their parents and masters, and do it in the fear and love of God. He will bless them here on earth in a way which is good for them, and He will bless and reward them more abundantly in heaven. The most beautiful example of the fulfilment of this commandment is our *Lord Himself,* of whom we read: *"And He went down with them* [His lowly parents], *and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them."* Luke 2, 51. He even remembered His mother when He was nailed to the cross. John 19, 26. 27.

REMEMBER: —

1. Parents are a most precious gift of God. God has placed them over us that through them He may provide for us, protect us, and lead us to Himself, our Savior, and to eternal life.

2. We should therefore highly honor and esteem our parents, serve and obey them in the fear and love of God, our heavenly Father.

3. This is well-pleasing to God, who will graciously reward us.

MEMORIZE: —

Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise: That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. Eph. 6, 2. 3.

Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord. Col. 3, 20.

Let them learn . . . to requite their parents; for that is good and acceptable before God. 1 Tim. 5, 4.

QUESTIONS.

1. What is God's holy will regarding our parents? 2. What place does God give our parents by commanding us to honor them? 3. Whose representatives are they? 4. When do we despise our parents? 5. When do we provoke them to anger? 6. Give examples of children who despised their parents. 7. How will God punish children who despise their parents? 8. What does it mean to hold our parents in honor? 9. How do we show in words and deeds that we honor our parents? 10. When do we serve them? 11. At what time especially can we repay their love? 12. What does it mean to obey our parents? 13. How should we carry out their commands? 14. Why should we love and highly esteem our parents? 15. Who are the "masters" whom God has placed over us? 16. What has God added to this commandment? 17. What does God teach us by adding this special promise? 18. Who is the most beautiful example of the fulfilment of this commandment?

LESSON 6.

The Fifth Commandment.

Which is the Fifth Commandment?

Thou shalt not kill.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not hurt nor harm our neighbor in his body, but help and befriend him in every bodily need.

1. You all know what it means to kill. It means to take our own life or the life of our neighbor, our fellow-man. This is what God forbids in this commandment. *God is the Giver of all life.* He alone, therefore, has the right to take it away. God made man in His image. How dare we destroy the image of God! Our neighbor's life should be *sacred* to us. God will punish him who takes his neighbor's life. *"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made He man."* Gen. 9, 6. Remember *Cain* and *Judas.*

2. God forbids still more in this commandment. Our Catechism explains it by saying: *"We should fear and love God that we may not hurt . . . our neighbor in his body."* In the story of the good Samaritan we learn what this means. The man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves (robbers), who wounded him and, leaving him half dead, departed. Luke 10, 30. These robbers hurt the Jew in his body, they brought his life into danger. But for the Samaritan he certainly would have died. The life of our neighbor may be hurt in other ways. Pharaoh of Egypt endangered the lives of the Israelites by compelling them to do labor that was too hard for them. We should not wound our neighbor in his body, or in any other way bring his life or health into danger and thus shorten his life.

3. *We should not harm our neighbor in his body,* that is, we should not by spiteful words or wicked deeds embitter his life and in this way shorten it. Remember how Joseph's brothers embittered his life by selling him into slavery, how they embittered the life of their father by telling him that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal. They made life a burden both to their brother and to their father.

4. *We should fear and love God that we may . . . help and befriend our neighbor in every bodily need.* Our neighbor is in bodily need when he is in danger of losing his life and health. Look again at the story of the good Samaritan. There you will learn what it means to help and befriend our neighbor in his bodily need. The poor Jew fell among robbers, who stripped him of his raiment, wounded him, and

carelessly departed, though that poor man was nearly dead. The Jew certainly was in bodily need, being in great danger of losing his life. A Samaritan passed, and, seeing this poor man, he took compassion on him. He went up to him and helped him. He bound up his wounds, set him on his own beast, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. He helped the poor Jew in his bodily need and saved his life. — But the good Samaritan did more. The next day, not being able to stay any longer with his afflicted brother, he gave money to the host of the inn, and asked him to take care of the wounded Jew in his stead after his departure; he even promised to give the innkeeper more money if it should be necessary. The good Samaritan befriended the Jew, he acted as a friend to him. Not only did he save him from death, he also assisted him until he was no longer in bodily need. *"Go, and do thou likewise,"* our Lord says. — That Jew, like all the Jews at that time, most probably, was an enemy of the Samaritans. The Samaritan knew that, and still he helped and befriended him. We should help and befriend not only our relatives and friends, or those who are able and willing to repay us and help us when we are in need, but also our *enemies,* those who hate and despitefully use us. *"If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink."* Rom. 12, 20. *"Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."* Matt. 5, 44.

5. The Samaritan *took compassion* on the Jew, therefore he helped him. The compassion, or pity, was in his heart. All our good works and all our sins issue from the heart. *We should watch over our hearts, over our thoughts.* No anger and hate against our neighbor should be in our hearts. And even if our neighbor does us wrong, if he injures and insults us, we should not revenge ourselves, but love our brother. *"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."* 1 John 3, 15. — We should always be kind, merciful, and forgiving to our neighbor, even to our enemy. *"Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy."* Matt. 5, 7. And

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above all, we should *fear and love God*, then we shall help and befriend our neighbor, him whom God has made in His image.

REMEMBER: —

1. Life is God's gift. Only He who gave it has the right to take it. The life of our neighbor should be sacred to us.

2. Therefore we should not kill or hurt or harm our neighbor, our fellow-man, in his body, nor hate him or be angry with him. God has made man in His image.

3. We should help and befriend our neighbor whenever he is in bodily need, always be kind and merciful to him, and forgive him when he wrongs us.

MEMORIZE: —

Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made He man. Gen. 9, 6.

Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. 1 John 3, 15.

Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink. Rom. 12, 20.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Matt. 5, 7.

QUESTIONS.

1. What does it mean to kill? 2. Why should we not take our fellow-man's life? 3. In whose image did God make man? 4. What does God, furthermore, forbid in this commandment? 5. What does it mean to hurt our neighbor in his body? 6. What does it mean to harm him in his body? 7. From whom may we learn how to fulfil this commandment? 8. How did the good Samaritan help the Jew? 9. How did he befriend him? 10. When, even, should we help our neighbor? 11. What does our Lord say Matt. 5, 44? 12. Where do all our good works and all our sins rise? 13. What kind of thoughts should not be in our hearts against our neighbor? 14. What does the Bible tell us of him who hates his brother? 15. How should we be disposed towards our neighbor if he wrongs us? 16. When will we fulfil this commandment? 17. What does our Lord say about the merciful?

LESSON 7.

The Sixth Commandment.

Which is the Sixth Commandment?

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may lead a chaste and decent life in word and deed, and each love and honor his spouse.

1. *We should lead a chaste and decent life,* that is the demand of our God and heavenly Father according to the Sixth Commandment. Our hearts must be chaste to make our lives chaste and decent. Our *hearts* should be *chaste,* that is, free from evil lusts, free from unclean and lewd thoughts and desires. When our hearts are chaste and pure, our lives will be decent and modest and clean. The chastity of our hearts will show itself in all the acts of our life. *"Keep thyself pure,"* says the Word of God. 1 Tim. 5, 22. Keep your heart pure and chaste.

2. *We should lead a chaste and decent life in word.* We should refrain from *all filthy words* that prove our heart to be unclean, from all words, songs, jests, etc., of which we would be ashamed before God, or before our parents if they would hear them. We should shun all those jests and verses which boy whispers to boy, or girl to girl, lest decent persons might overhear them. Only such words as are good and clean should pass our lips. Never use a word that you would be ashamed of in the presence of your parents and teachers! Always remember that God is with you, that He will hear every word you utter in secret. *"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good."* Eph. 4, 29.

3. *We should lead a chaste and decent life in deed.* We should shun all acts which are mostly done in secret, all deeds which we would be ashamed of in the presence of God, our parents, or other decent people. We should walk honestly as in the day. Rom. 13, 13. We should keep all members of our

body clean and pure. *Our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost.* 1 Cor. 6, 19. How could a child of God use a member of his body for filthy purposes and so defile God's temple, make it impure! We should be modest and decent in our behavior, manners, dress, etc.

4. *What must we do to lead such a chaste and decent life?* Our hearts, by nature, are unclean and unchaste, full of evil desires. We cannot hinder evil lusts from springing up in our hearts at times. But with the help of God we must try, and try earnestly, *to quench them, to put them down,* lest they gain a place in our hearts. We can do this only *by means of God's Word and prayer.* Think of God's holy commandment, of the will of our heavenly Father, according to which we should be pure in heart. God says: *"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God."* Matt. 5, 8. Remember that God knows the secret thoughts of your heart, and you will say with Joseph: *"How, then, can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"* Gen. 39, 9. The fear and love of God will put down all evil lusts and lewd thoughts. And whenever filthy desires arise and tempt you, *pray* to God for His help, pray earnestly and fervently: *"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."* Ps. 51, 10.

5. In order to lead a chaste and decent life, *we should, as far as possible, shun all temptations and all places and occasions where such temptations will come upon us.* The world is an unclean place, full of evil lusts. Temptations meet us everywhere. Therefore we must always watch over ourselves. *"Flee youthful lusts,"* 2 Tim. 2, 22, as Joseph fled when Potiphar's wife tempted him. We should not go to places where such temptations may be met; we should shun bad company, impure books or pictures, theaters, etc., where indecent talk or pictures may excite evil lusts in us.

6. *When we are alone and idle,* the devil often comes to tempt us with impure thoughts and desires. In order to lead a chaste and decent life, we should avoid idleness and work diligently and faithfully. Find something useful to do in work or innocent play, and Satan will find less time to tempt

you with lustful thoughts. But above all, pray to your heavenly Father that He would guard you in all temptations, that you may overcome and obtain the victory.

7. We should fear and love God *that each may love and honor his spouse. Spouse* is man or wife, persons who live in holy matrimony, as your parents do. *Matrimony* is instituted by God, and it is His will that husband and wife should love and honor each other, that they should faithfully live together till death parts them. If one is unfaithful to the other, or leaves the other, he or she commits *adultery.*

REMEMBER: —

1. God alone can make your heart chaste and keep it clean from sinful lust. Pray to Him: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Ps. 51, 10.

2. When temptation comes near you, when you feel in your heart the sinful lust, remember: God is with me, He sees and hears everything I do, even the innermost thoughts of my heart. "How, then, can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" Gen. 39, 9.

3. Watch over yourself and keep away from all places where temptation is sure to come. "Flee youthful lusts." 2 Tim. 2, 22.

MEMORIZE: —

Let us walk honestly as in the day. Rom. 13, 13.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good. Eph. 4, 29.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Ps. 51, 10.

Keep thyself pure. 1 Tim. 5, 22.

Flee youthful lusts. 2 Tim. 2, 22.

QUESTIONS.

1. What does God command in the Sixth Commandment? 2. When will our *hearts* be chaste? 3. When will our lives be decent? 4. What does God demand 1 Tim. 5, 22? 5. When will we be chaste and decent in *words?* 6. What kind of words should we never use? 7. How do we lead a chaste and decent life in *deed?* 8. What does God Himself call our bodies in His

Word? 9. When do we defile this temple of God and make it impure? 10. How should our behavior, our manners, be? 11. How are our hearts by nature? 12. What feelings will therefore often arise in our hearts? 13. By what means can and should we put down these evil thoughts? 14. What should they not gain in our hearts? 15. What places should we avoid in order to lead a chaste life? 16. Name some such places and occasions. 17. What should we also avoid, in order that Satan may have less opportunity to tempt us? 18. What does God command those who live together in holy matrimony? 19. How long should husband and wife live together in this union? 20. What sin do they commit if they prove unfaithful to each other?

LESSON 8.

The Seventh Commandment.

Which is the Seventh Commandment?

Thou shalt not steal.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not take our neighbor's money or goods, nor get them by false ware or dealing, but help him to improve and protect his property and business.

1. *We should not steal;* that means, *we should not take our neighbor's money or goods.* Our neighbor's, our fellowman's, money and his goods do not belong to us, but to him. *They are his property.* It is God's will that men should have property, money, and goods that belong to them. All the goods in the world come from Him, they are His gift. He gives to every one as much earthly goods as He pleases, as much or as little as is best for him. There always will be rich people and poor people among us. *The property of our neighbor should be sacred to us because it is given him by God, our heavenly Father.*

2. *We should not take our neighbor's money or goods.* It belongs to him according to God's will; therefore we should not steal, that is, not take his property away from him. He may give and present it to us, if he so chooses, but we

should not take it. We may buy his goods at a fair price, if he is willing to sell, but we should not take it against his will. This may be done in various ways. Think of the *thieves* into whose hands the Jew fell who came down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Luke 10, 30. They stripped him of his raiment; *openly* and *by force* they took his clothes and all that he had. We call such men *robbers.* — Others do not take their neighbor's property by force, they sneak into their neighbor's house and take his money and valuables *secretly,* without his knowledge, or they pick his pockets when there is a chance. *Achan* took some of the spoils of the city of Jericho secretly and hid the goods in the earth under his tent, in order that nobody might know what he had taken. Josh. 7, 21. Such men are called *thieves;* their sin is called *theft.* Also to-day there are many robbers and thieves in the world. — Beware of taking your fellow-pupil's property, be it ever so small, a pen or a pencil, etc. That would be theft. Remember that your heavenly Father, whom you fear and love, will see you. Our Lord says: *"Let him that stole steal, no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good."* Eph. 4, 28.

3. *We should not get our neighbor's money and goods by false ware or dealing.* That is another way of taking our neighbor's property. Taking our neighbor's property in this manner is generally called fraud or cheating. *"Let no man go beyond* [what belongs to him according to the will of God], *and defraud his brother in any matter* [in his trade and business], *because that the Lord is the avenger of all such"* (the Lord will punish all that commit such frauds). 1 Thess. 4, 6. We should not take our neighbor's money *by false ware,* that is, by selling bad, poor wares to him in place of good ones for which he pays. We should not take his money *by false dealings,* that is, by using short weights and measures, and in this way keeping back what belongs to our neighbor, by taking too much profit when buying or selling anything, and thus cheating our brother, by borrowing money or other goods and not returning them, etc. *"The wicked borroweth and payeth not again."* Ps. 37, 21. There are

many ways of taking our brother's money and goods. A child of God will shun them all, he will be *honest* in all his dealings with his neighbor.

4. *We should help our neighbor to improve . . . his property and business.* We should help and assist our neighbor, as much as we can, by *word and deed,* that his property and business, by means of which he earns his living, may be *improved,* become better. If our neighbor is poor and suffers want, we should help him by *giving* him of our money, or other goods which he may be in need of. *"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again."* Prov. 19, 17. We should lend him our money if he is in need, until he may be able to repay it. *"Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away."* Matt. 5, 42. *Zacchaeus,* after having joyfully received the Lord into his house, was ready to give half of his goods to the poor. Luke 19, 8. How *well-pleasing* it is to our Lord when we help the poor and needy! *"To do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."* Heb. 13, 16.

5. *We should help our neighbor to . . . protect his property and business.* Our neighbor's property and business sometimes is in danger, in danger by water or fire, or by wicked men who try to harm our brother. We should *warn* him against these dangers, we should give him *good advice how to overcome them.* But we should not only warn and advise, but also assist him as much as we can that his property may not be lost or come to harm. Our love to God should prompt us to serve our brethren. *"This commandment have we from Him, that he who loves God love his brother also."* 1 John 4, 21.

REMEMBER: —

1. All our property has been given us by God. God bestows these goods as He pleases. Rich and poor will always be among us. The property of our neighbor should be sacred to us because God has given it to him.

2. We should, therefore, not take our neighbor's money and goods against his will, neither by robbery and theft, nor

by defrauding him by poor wares or crooked dealings. Always be honest!

3. We should rather help him to improve his property and business and to preserve it from danger and harm.

MEMORIZE: —

Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Matt. 5, 42.

He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again. Prov. 19, 17.

To do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Heb. 13, 16.

QUESTIONS.

1. Stating it in one word, what do we call all the money and goods our neighbor has? 2. From whom did he receive his property? 3. How should the property of our neighbor be to us? 4. What does it mean to steal? 5. In what way do men take the property of their neighbor against his will? 6. What do we call robbery? 7. What is theft? 8. How should we also not take our neighbor's money or goods? 9. When do we take our neighbor's money by false wares? 10. When do we take it by false dealings? 11. How does the Bible call him who borrows money, but does not repay it? (Ps. 37, 21.) 12. What does God command us to do in behalf of our neighbor's property and business? 13. How should we help our neighbor when he is poor and suffering want? 14. What does our Lord say Matt. 5, 42? 15. To whom does he lend who takes pity on the poor? 16. What do we learn from Heb. 13, 16? 17. What should we do to protect our neighbor's property? 18. If we love God, whom shall we love also?

LESSON 9.

The Eighth Commandment.

Which is the Eighth Commandment?

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not deceitfully belie, betray, slander nor defame our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything.

1. *"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor,"* that is the command of our heavenly Father in the Eighth Commandment. *False witness* is any false statement against our neighbor, anything false and deceitful that we say against him. A *false* statement is saying something that is not true; it is a statement *against* our neighbor when it will harm him, or hurt his good name, or deprive him of it altogether. — False witness comes out of an evil *heart,* a heart that is false and insincere against our neighbor. We should not even *think evil* of him. *"Let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against your neighbor."* Zech. 8, 17. If we love God and for His sake our neighbor, we shall always think well of him, even if he is our enemy.

2. We can bear false witness against our neighbor in many ways. Our Catechism explains: "We should fear and love God that we may not deceitfully belie, betray, slander, nor defame our neighbor." — *We should not belie our neighbor. Potiphar's wife* belied Joseph. She told her husband a lie about Joseph, saying that he had tried to wrong her. She did so in order to harm Joseph, to bring him into prison. — *We should not lie,* we should never wilfully and knowingly tell an untruth, or withhold the truth from our neighbor to harm him. Be careful always to tell the truth. Our Lord tells us that the *devil* is a liar and the father of it. John 8, 44. If you tell a lie, you do the work of the devil. Remember that you are a child of God and that a child of God fears and loves his heavenly Father. God hates all liars and will most certainly punish them. *"He that telleth lies shall not tarry* [remain] *in My sight,"* says the Lord. Ps. 101, 7.

3. *We should not betray our neighbor.* We should not reveal his secrets, not tell others what our neighbor does not want other people to know. It shows a false and deceitful heart against our brother to reveal his secret sins. *"A talebearer revealeth secrets; but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter."* Prov. 11, 13.

4. *We should not slander nor defame our neighbor.* We are not to speak evil against our brother behind his back,

when he is not present and therefore not able to defend himself. Even if the evil which we tell of him be true, we should not tell others of it. Holy Scripture admonishes us: *"Speak not evil one of another, brethren."* Jas. 4, 11. Because we are brethren, we should not speak evil, but well, of one another. If we slander and backbite our neighbor, speak evil of him when he is not present, we *defame* him, that is, we harm his good name; it is our fault if other people will think evil of him. We are all much inclined to these sins; therefore beware of backbiting and slandering your neighbor. Honor and a good name are easily taken away, but not easily restored.

5. We should never speak against our neighbor to harm and injure him, but we are to speak *for* him. *We should defend him.* When in our presence anybody speaks evil of our brother behind his back, so that this brother cannot speak for himself, we should not remain silent, but speak for him, defend him against all false statements and lies uttered against him. We should never allow our neighbor to be slandered in our presence.

6. *We should speak well of our neighbor.* We are to speak well of his good works and deeds, to praise them as far as it can be done in keeping with the truth. Especially when others speak evil of our brother, when they slander and defame him, we ought to take his part and speak well of him, so that he may keep his good name. We read of Jonathan, David's friend: *"And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul, his father* [who was David's enemy and wanted to kill him], *and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant, against David, because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been to thee-ward* [towards you] *very good."* 1 Sam. 19, 4. And in verse 6 we read that Saul listened to Jonathan and resolved not to kill David. Owing to Jonathan's good words, then, David was safe for a while. The *Jews* who asked Jesus to heal the servant of the centurion spoke highly of him. They besought the Lord instantly to hear the prayer of the centurion, saying, *"That he was worthy for whom He should do this, for he loveth our*

nation, and he hath built us a synagog." Luke 7, 4. 5. In the same way we should speak well of our neighbor and praise him.

7. *We should put the best construction on everything* that we hear of our neighbor, or that we see him doing. We should put the best construction on everything, that is, in love and charity we should cover his faults and not make too much of them. We should explain all his words and deeds in his favor as far as this can be done in keeping with the truth. "*Charity shall cover the multitude of sins.*" 1 Pet. 4, 9. True love and charity always thinks the best of the neighbor, always hopes for the best, and will suffer wrong rather than do wrong. "*Charity believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*" 1 Cor. 13, 7. It is a noble virture to explain as best you can all you may hear of your neighbor.

8. In this commandment God demands of us, His children, many good works which are well-pleasing to Him, if only we would recognize them. There is nothing which can do both greater good or harm in all matters than our *tongue,* though it is such a small and feeble member of our body.

REMEMBER: —

1. If we love God and, for His sake, our neighbor, we shall always think well of him, even though he is our enemy.

2. A child of God should never tell a lie. God hates a liar and will punish him.

3. Always speak well of your neighbor, defend him if he is falsely accused, and explain his deeds and words in his favor.

4. "There is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether." Ps. 139, 4.

MEMORIZE: —

Let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbor. Zech. 8, 17.

Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor. Eph. 4, 25.

Speak not evil one of another, brethren. Jas. 4, 11.

Charity shall cover the multitude of sins. 1 Pet. 4, 8.

QUESTIONS.

1. Which is the Eighth Commandment? 2. What does it mean to bear false witness against our neighbor? 3. When is a statement a false statement? 4. When is it a statement against our neighbor? 5. When do we belie our brother? 6. What does it mean to lie? 7. Who was the first liar in the world? 8. How does God look upon a liar? 9. What does it mean to betray our neighbor? 10. When do we slander and defame him? 11. What ought we to do to protect the good name of our neighbor? 12. When should we defend him? 13. What does it mean to speak well of him? 14. Who, for example, spoke well of his friend? 15. Whom did the Jews praise in the presence of the Lord? 16. What does it mean to put the best construction on everything? 17. What do we read 1 Pet. 4, 8? 18. Of what member of our body should we take especial care?

LESSON 10.

The Ninth and Tenth Commandments.

Which is the Ninth Commandment?

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not craftily seek to get our neighbor's inheritance and house, nor obtain it by a show of right, but help and be of service to him in keeping it.

Which is the Tenth Commandment?

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not estrange, force, or entice away from our neighbor his wife, servants, or cattle, but urge them to stay and do their duty.

1. In the Ninth and the Tenth Commandment God forbids the same. Both commandments begin with the words: *"Thou shalt not covet."* To covet means eagerly and sinfully

to desire and want what does not belong to us, but to some one else, to our neighbor. We are covetous when we envy our neighbor because of what he has, and want it for ourselves, and will not be satisfied until we have obtained it for ourselves. Remember the story of *King Ahab and Naboth.* Ahab, the wicked king of Israel, had a strong desire for a certain vineyard which was the property of Naboth. He offered to buy the vineyard, but Naboth did not want to sell it because he had inherited it from his fathers. Ahab kept on longing for the property of his neighbor and was not satisfied until Naboth was stoned to death, and he was able to take possession of the vineyard. 1 Kings 21, 1—16. Here we learn what it is to covet our neighbor's property.

2. We are all, by nature, covetous. We all envy our neighbor and desire to obtain what belongs to him. God forbids such evil desires. Already in the Seventh Commandment we learned that our neighbor's property ought to be sacred to us because God Himself gave it to him. God does not want us even to covet it, to *desire* to obtain it against the will of our neighbor. We should, therefore, not *craftily,* with cunning and fraud, *seek to get our neighbor's inheritance,* what he inherited from his parents, or his *house,* nor try *to obtain it by a show of right,* in such a way that it appears right before men while it is wrong in the sight of God. We should not *force or entice away our neighbor's wife, or servants, or cattle, or whatever belongs to him.*

3. The property of our neighbor should be sacred to us. Because we love him for God's sake, we should *help him and be of service to him in keeping his property.* We should urge our *neighbor's wife or servants to remain with him and do their duty towards him* whenever we see that they are seeking to leave him. God, our heavenly Father, tells us in His Word: *"By love serve one another."* Gal. 5, 13. And furthermore He says: *"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."* Phil. 2, 4.

4. God forbids us to covet our neighbor's property, all that belongs to him. *Covetousness is a sin of the heart.* God teaches us a very important lesson in these last two com-

mandments. He teaches us that not only our evil deeds nor only our evil words are sins against the holy God, *but also our evil thoughts.* In the sight of God every desire for anything that He has forbidden in His Word is evil, is a sin, even if this sinful thought does not break out in evil words or deeds. Every lust in itself is truly a sin which God has threatened to punish. *"Thou shalt not covet,"* is His demand. Every sinful thought, every impure desire in our heart, proves that we do not fear and love our heavenly Father as we should, that we have broken not only these two commandments, but the first also, yea, all the commandments of our Lord.

5. God demands that our hearts be holy. There should be no evil lust, no desire for any sin in our hearts, *but only a holy desire to serve our God and Father. "Ye shall be holy* [without any sin], *for I, the Lord, your God, am holy."* Lev. 19, 2. Our hearts should be so filled with fear and love of God and all that is good in His eyes that no evil thought, no sinful lust, can find room in them. *"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."* Matt. 5, 48.

6. These last two commandments, even as the First Commandment, especially teach us that we have not kept the commandments of our Lord, and *that we cannot keep them perfectly.* Our hearts are full of lust against the demands of God, full of evil thoughts. Our lust so often entices and tempts us to sin by word and deed. We must confess that *we all are sinners in the sight of God.* And "the wages of sin is death." We are poor and lost sinners. Therefore *we daily pray for God's forgiveness,* we beg our heavenly Father to be gracious unto us for Christ's sake, who has fulfilled the commandments of God in our stead and borne our sins.

REMEMBER: —

1. "Thou shalt not covet," is God's command. If you covet what belongs to your neighbor, you sin against God. Every desire in your heart to do what the Lord has forbidden is a sin in the sight of God.

2. God wants our hearts to be without sin, perfect and holy, as He Himself is holy.

3. My heart is sinful. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Ps. 51, 10.

MEMORIZE: —

By love serve one another. Gal. 5, 13.

Ye shall be holy; for I, the Lord, your God, am holy. Lev. 19, 2.

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. Matt. 5, 48.

QUESTIONS.

1. What does God forbid in the last two commandments? 2. What does it mean to covet? 3. Why should we not covet our neighbor's property? 4. How should we not seek to get our neighbor's inheritance and house? 5. What does it mean to obtain our neighbor's property by a show of right? 6. Whom should we not force and entice away from our neighbor? 7. What should we do concerning our neighbor's inheritance and house? 8. What does our Lord tell us Gal. 5, 13? 9. What should we do concerning our neighbor's wife and servants? 10. What important lesson do these commandments teach us? 11. What does every impure desire in our heart prove? 12. How should our hearts be? 13. What does our Lord command Lev. 19, 2? 14. With what ought our hearts to be filled? 15. What does our Savior say Matt. 5, 48? 16. What must we confess when we consider the commandments of God? 17. What should therefore be our daily prayer?

LESSON 11.

The Close of the Commandments.

What does God say of all these commandments?

He says thus: I, the Lord, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments.

What does this mean?

God threatens to punish all that transgress these commandments. Therefore we should fear His wrath, and not act contrary to them. But He promises grace and every blessing to all that keep these commandments. Therefore we should also love and trust in Him, and willingly do according to His commandments.

1. Thus says the Lord of all His commandments: *"I, the Lord, thy God, am a jealous God."* God reminds us that He who has given us His commandments is the *Lord.* He is our Lord, we are His servants. He, as our Lord, has the right to give us His commandments, and we are in duty bound to obey them. — He furthermore reminds us that He is *our God.* Through Christ, our Savior, God has become our God, our Father. A father will give only good gifts to His children. Our heavenly Father means well in giving His commandments. They are to be a blessing to us and will be a blessing, if we rightly use them. We should thank Him for His commandments. — God tells us that He is a *jealous God.* God is not like a weak father who gives his children commands, but does not see to it that his children obey. God is a strict, a very strict father. He watches over His children whether they fulfil His commandments or break them. — And do not forget: Our God is the *almighty* God. He has the power to do what He says, to carry out His threats and to fulfil His promises. *"There is one Lawgiver* [this lawgiver is God, who has given us His commandments], *who is able to save and to destroy."* Jas. 4, 12.

2. God is a *jealous* God. This He shows by *"visiting the iniquity* [the wickedness] *of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him."* That means: *"God threatens to punish all that transgress these commandments."* Those who break the commandments of God surely deserve punishment. By breaking the Law of God they sin against Him, they show that they *hate* God, who has created and preserved them, who gives them life and all they need, who wants to be their Father in Christ, that

they may become His children. Instead of loving God, they hate Him, who is the Giver of all they have and enjoy. — What punishment does God threaten those who hate Him? This is what He threatens: *"Cursed be he that confirmeth* [keeps] *not all the words of this Law to do them."* God's displeasure, His curse, His anger and wrath, will be upon him that sins. How fearful is it to be cursed by the almighty God! — When God gave Adam the first command, He said: *"In the day that thou eatest thereof* [of the tree] *thou shalt surely die."* Gen. 2, 17. God threatens *death* to every sinner. *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."* Ezek. 18, 20. *"The wages of sin is death,"* God tells us in His Word. Rom. 6, 23. And after death eternal damnation awaits the sinner. *Verily, we should fear God's wrath and terrible punishment and not act contrary to His commandments.* We should daily pray our heavenly Father for grace to help us shun and flee all sins, even every evil thought that would bring God's wrath and punishment upon us. Daily we will go to Christ, our only Savior, who has redeemed us from all sin, from death, and from the power of the devil.

3. Our God is a *merciful* God. This He proves *"by showing mercy unto thousands that love Him and keep His commandments."* God threatens to punish all that transgress these commandments, but He also *"promises grace and every blessing to all that keep these commandments."* Our God is a gracious and loving God. He promises to reward those who keep His commandments. It is true, we do not deserve any reward, even if we fulfil His Law and live according to His will. It is our duty to do so. But so kind and loving is He to His children that He will reward them if they do what they owe Him. — What does our God promise us? He promises *grace and every blessing.* The grace of God will be upon us when in love of God we try to keep His commandments. He will be well pleased with us, His children. What a great thing it is to be assured of God's grace and good will! Who can harm us when the Lord is with us? He furthermore promises *every blessing* to those who keep His commandments. God will bless His obedient children here on earth,

in this life, but far more will He bless them in the life to come with eternal salvation. In heaven we shall see Him, our Father and Savior. *Therefore we should also love and trust in Him and willingly do according to His commandments.*

4. The Ten Commandments teach us the *holy will of our God,* or, as we also call it, *His Law.* Here we learn what as God's children we should do and not do, in order to please Him. Gladly we should learn it. We desire to love Him who has loved us. — We learn also *that we have not kept the Law,* that we cannot keep it, that we daily transgress the commandments of our Lord. We learn that we are sinners who have deserved death and damnation. This also we should learn willingly, for it teaches us *how much we need a savior.* And then we go to our only Savior, to our Lord, who has fulfilled the Law in our stead.

REMEMBER: —

1. God is our Lord. He has a right to give us His commandments, and it is our duty to obey Him. He is a jealous God, who will see to it that His Law is fulfilled.

2. God threatens to punish all who hate Him and transgress His commandments. Fear His wrath and do not act contrary to His holy will.

3. God promises grace and every blessing to all who love Him and keep His commandments. Love and trust Him, and willingly do according to His will.

MEMORIZE: —

There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Jas. 4, 12.

Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this Law to do them. Deut. 27, 26.

The soul that sinneth, it shall die. Ezek. 18, 20.

The wages of sin is death. Rom. 6, 23.

This do, and thou shalt live. Luke 10, 28.

QUESTIONS.

1. What does God call Himself at the close of the Ten Commandments? 2. What right has God as our Lord? 3. What is our duty to Him? 4. Of what does God remind us when He calls Himself a jealous God? 5. What does God threaten to all that transgress His commandments? 6. What is the punishment that God threatens? 7. What is the wages of sin? 8. What punishment does God threaten the sinner after his death? 9. What does God promise those that love Him and keep His commandments? 10. Why do we not deserve any reward? 11. What is the reward which God promises us? 12. What should we do because God promises such rich reward? 13. What do the Ten Commandments teach us? 14. What do we furthermore learn from them? 15. Of whom are we in need because we are sinners? 16. Who is our true and only Savior?

LESSON 12.

Review.

1. We have studied the Ten Commandments. Who gave us these commandments? In all His commandments God tells us His holy will; He tells us what we should do and not do: Why should we gladly obey Him? What is our Father's will according to the *First Commandment*? When do we regard God as our God? When do we show that we fear and love Him? What does it mean to trust in God? What sin do we commit if we fear and love any one more than the true God?

2. Which is the *Second Commandment*? Our Catechism begins the explanation of every commandment after the First with these words: "We should fear and love God." What do we learn from this? In the Second Commandment God reveals His will concerning His holy name. Mention some of God's names. In all these names God shows us who and what He is. His name should therefore be sacred to us. When do we take His holy name in vain? What does it mean to curse by God's name? How should we use His holy name?

3. Which is the *Third Commandment*? We celebrate as our holy-day the first day of the week, Sunday. Who instituted this holy-day? How do we sanctify our holy-day? We should not despise preaching and His Word. When do we despise preaching and God's Word? How should we hold God's Word? How is this done?—To whom do the first three commandments relate? What is their sum? To whom do the other commandments relate? How should we love our neighbor?

4. We should love our neighbor as ourselves. Of all our fellow-men our dear *parents* are nearest to us. What is God's will concerning our parents? What place does God give them by commanding us to honor them? Whose representatives are they? We should honor our parents as God's representatives. God has placed them over us. What should we therefore not do with regard to our parents? When do we honor them?

5. In the *Fifth Commandment* God teaches us His will regarding the life, body, and health of our neighbor. Who is the Giver of all life? What right, therefore, belongs to God alone? God forbids us to kill, to take the life of our neighbor. But He forbids more. What does God furthermore forbid in this commandment? When do we hurt our neighbor in his body? When do we harm him in his body? When should we help and befriend our neighbor? What is "bodily need"? How should our hearts be disposed towards our neighbor according to the Fifth Commandment?

6. According to the *Sixth Commandment* we should lead a chaste and decent life. How should our hearts be in order that we may lead such a life? When are our hearts chaste? When do we lead a chaste and decent life in words? What acts must we shun to lead a chaste and decent life in deed? Our hearts, by nature, are unclean and full of evil lust; what should we do that our hearts may become clean? Do you know the prayer for a clean heart? Ps. 51, 10. What kind of place is this world? What may meet us everywhere? What places should we therefore shun? What does God command of married people in this commandment?

7. In the *Seventh Commandment* God protects our neighbor's property. From whom do we receive all that belongs to us? The property of our neighbor should be sacred to us because it is given him by God. What does God therefore forbid in this commandment? When do we steal our neighbor's property? There are many ways of taking our neighbor's property. Name some of them. How do we take our neighbor's goods and money by false ware and dealing? In what way should we help our neighbor to keep and improve his property?

8. Which is the *Eighth Commandment?* What is false witness? When do we bear false witness against our neighbor? When do we tell a lie? Never tell a lie. God hates all liars. Who was the first liar? What does it mean to slander and defame our brother? How should we act toward our neighbor according to the Eighth Commandment? When do we put the best construction on everything we hear about him? Of which member of our body should we take special care?

9. *The Ninth and the Tenth Commandment* begin with these words: "Thou shalt not covet." Covetousness is in the heart. What important lesson do we therefore learn from these commandments? What should not be found in our hearts according to these commandments? How should our hearts be? Are they holy? What must we therefore confess? What should be our daily prayer?

10. *What does God say of all these commandments?* Why does He call Himself the Lord? What does He mean when He calls Himself a jealous God? What does He threaten in these words? Whom will He punish? What does He threaten those who hate Him and transgress His commandments? Therefore we should fear His wrath and not act contrary to His commandments. What does God promise those who love Him and keep His commandments? What is the reward which He promises them? Why does He give His children such rich rewards? What should this grace and kindness of God induce us to do? What do the Ten Com-

mandments teach us? We do not perfectly fulfil the will of God; we are sinners. Whom are we in need of because we are sinners? Who is our true and only Savior?

Let us all diligently study the Ten Commandments and learn therefrom the will of our Father. Let us pray to God for His Spirit that we may live according to His will more and more.

LESSON 13.

Our Creed.

1. You have already learned by heart the Three Articles of the Creed. These articles, together with their explanation, form the *Second Chief Part of our Small Catechism.* The Three Articles are called the *Creed,* that is, the *Christian faith.* In these articles is contained all that we Christians *believe* in our hearts, and *confess* with our mouths, *regarding God and His works,* all that He has done and will do for us, His children. Through Baptism you have become God's children; you must therefore also believe and confess what our Church confesses in these Three Articles. Consequently it is necessary for us to study them, in order that we may understand them.

2. No man knows of himself who God is and what He has done for us. *God alone* can tell us about these things. And God has revealed Himself to us; He has told us in His holy *Word* who He is and what He has done for us. From Holy Scriptures alone do we learn what we, as Christians, are to know and believe regarding God and His works. And what God tells us in His Word we verily may believe. It must be true, since God cannot and will not lie. — All the doctrines in Holy Scriptures which teach us who God is and what He has done and will do for us to save us, we call the *Gospel.* The word Gospel means *glad tidings, good news.*

3. In the first part of our Small Catechism we also studied a word of God, and we have called it the *holy will of God,*

or the *Law*. So you see that there are *two chief doctrines in our Bible;* one we call the Law; the other, the Gospel. Both are revealed to us by our heavenly Father, both are the Word of God. *But they differ greatly from each other.* The *Law* tells us how, according to the will of God, we ought to be and what we must do and not do to please our God. From it we learn that we all are sinners, having not kept His commandments, and that God threatens to punish all who hate Him and break His commandments; that, therefore, as transgressors of His Law, we deserve His punishment, death and damnation. The Law does not bring us glad tidings. — The *Gospel* has quite another message for us. It brings a message of joy to sinners, to those who have broken the commandments. It tells us that God loves even us sinners. *"God so loved the world,"* that is, all sinful men, *"that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* John 3, 16. It teaches us what and how much God, moved by His love and grace toward us sinners, has done and will do to save us from the deserved punishment of the Law, from sin, death, and hell. These are indeed good tidings, tidings of great joy for all men, to know that we have a Savior who can and will save us and give us eternal happiness in heaven. This Gospel of great joy we hear and learn in the Three Articles of our Christian faith.

4. We call the Three Articles the Creed, or the *Apostles' Creed.* This Creed contains what the apostles of the Lord believed and what they taught in all the world, as the Lord Himself had commanded them: *"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."* Mark 16, 15. Let us give thanks to our dear Lord for having graciously sent His Gospel also to us that we may be saved thereby.

5. We have three articles of faith, because God has done three great saving works for us. We call these *Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification.* In our next lesson we shall begin our study of the first of the Three Articles, which treats of Creation.

REMEMBER: —

1. *In the Three Articles is contained all that we believe and confess regarding God and His saving works for us. We call them also the Apostles' Creed. Our Creed is taken from Scripture.*

2. *There are two chief doctrines in the Bible, the Law and the Gospel. Both are God's Word. The Law tells us how, according to the will of God, we ought to be and what we must do and not do. It also tells us that God will punish us because we have not fulfilled His commandments.*

3. *The Gospel brings to us the glad tidings of the grace and love of God. It tells us what God in His grace has done and will do to save us from the punishment of the Law, from sin and hell.*

MEMORIZE: —

The Gospel is the glad tidings of the grace of God toward all men, proclaiming to them salvation from sin and death in Christ Jesus.

God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3, 16.

Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. Mark 16, 15.

QUESTIONS.

1. Of what does the Second Chief Part of our Catechism treat? 2. How do we also call these Three Articles? 3. What does the word "creed" mean? 4. Where are the Three Articles of our Christian faith taken from? 5. How many chief doctrines are contained in the Scriptures? 6. How are these two doctrines called? 7. What does our Lord tell us in His Law? 8. With what does the Law threaten us because we have not fulfilled it? 9. What will our punishment be according to the Law? 10. What is the Gospel? 11. What does the word "Gospel" mean? 12. What does God reveal to us in His Gospel? 13. Recite the Gospel-message that we find John 3, 16. 14. In what work especially has God shown His love toward mankind? 15. Who, according to the words of our Savior, shall not perish? 16. What will God give to him that believeth? 17. Why are the Three Articles called the Apostles' Creed? 18. Why do we confess our faith in three articles? 19. What are the three great works which God has done and will do for our salvation? 20. To whom is the Gospel to be preached? 21. Recite the command of our Lord to His disciples to preach the Gospel to all the world. 22. What does the word "creature" in this verse mean?

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LESSON 14.

The First Article.

OF CREATION.

Which is the First Article of the Creed?

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that God has made me and all creatures.

1. *"I believe in God,"* thus the First Article begins. Every Christian should confess and every true Christian does confess: *I, I myself,* believe in God. It is of no avail to us that anybody else believes, we ourselves must believe in God. *We believe in God the Father Almighty.* We believe that God is the Father Almighty, or the almighty Father. And why do we believe that God is the almighty Father? Because He is *the Maker of heaven and earth.* That is God's first great, saving work for us. He has made heaven and earth. We call this work the *creation.*

2. *God is the Maker of heaven and earth.* Our Catechism explains these words thus: *"I believe that God has made me and all creatures."* God has made *me;* it is due to Him that I came into existence, that I am living. He gave me life and everything that I have. God, however, did not only make me, but me *and all creatures.* Creatures are all things that God has made. Heaven and earth, all the angels, the sun, the moon, the glittering stars, all things on earth, the mountain and the mighty oceans, all animals, large and small, all the plants on land and in the water, man himself; all things that we see, yes, even those we do not see, all things, visible and invisible, are His creatures. God has made them all, they are the work of His almighty power. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Gen. 1, 1. "By Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible." Col. 1, 16.

3. In Bible History you have already learned *how* God made or created heaven and earth. Before God began to create the world, nothing was there except God alone, the

Creator. God always was, is, and in all eternity will be. *"From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God."* Ps. 90, 2. — God did not have any material out of which to make this world. *Out of nothing* He created heaven and earth. God simply said, "Let there be light," and there was light. He simply said, Let there be the sun and the moon and the stars, and, behold, there they were, shining in all their splendor. In this manner, by speaking, by His word, God made all things, visible and invisible, heaven and earth. God has created everything without any means; *God has made heaven and earth and all creatures out of nothing, by His word.* We do not understand how this is possible; but we believe it because God Himself has revealed it to us in His Word. *"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God."* Heb. 11, 3. God made all things by His word, with the exception of His foremost creature, man. It pleased Him to form the first man in a different manner. Do you know how God made Adam? Read Gen. 1, 26—28 and 2, 7. — God could have made heaven and earth, as we see them now, in one instant, but it has pleased Him to do it in *six days.* In six days *"the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them."* Gen. 2, 1. And when all this was finished, *"God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good."* Gen. 1, 31.

4. When we consider this great work of our Lord, consider that He has made the whole world, the heavens and all the host of them, the mighty sun, the countless stars, the earth with all its treasures, with its millions of living creatures, must we not say that God, who created all these things by His word alone, is a *mighty* and *powerful* God, more powerful and mighty than all other things which He has made? And it is true indeed, God is more powerful than His creatures. He is *almighty.* We believe in God, *the Father Almighty. "With God nothing shall be impossible,"* Holy Scripture tells us. Luke 1, 37. *"He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased."* Ps. 115, 3. God is an almighty Father. In Him we can trust. He can and will be our help. No one and nothing can resist His mighty power.

5. When we consider how wonderful this world is made, when we consider that everything that came from the hand of God was very good, that everything was made as it should be to serve its end, must we not say that God is a very wise God, being able to plan such a wonderful and good work? Yea, *our God is the all-wise God.* What He does is always good and wise, even if we do not understand it. — And remember, moreover, that God has created this beautiful world for us, His children. This great and wonderful earth is to be our dwelling-place; sun, moon, and the stars are to serve us. Is not our God a loving, a good, a merciful God? Truly, *"the Lord is good to all; and His tender mercies are over all His works."* Ps. 145, 9. *"God is Love."* 1 John 4, 8. In Him, our loving, merciful God, will we trust; He *will* surely help us.

REMEMBER: —

1. *I myself must believe in God the Father Almighty. The faith of another cannot save me.*

2. *In six days God created heaven and earth. He is the Creator of all things, visible and invisible. He has created, that is, made, all things out of nothing, by His word. This we believe because God Himself has revealed it unto us in Holy Scriptures.*

3. *God, the Maker of heaven and earth, always has been and always will be. From everlasting to everlasting He is God. He is our almighty and all-wise Father, always loving, good, and merciful. In Him we can and will trust.*

MEMORIZE: —

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Gen. 1, 1.

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God. Heb. 11, 3.

From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God. Ps. 90, 2.

With God nothing shall be impossible. Luke 1, 37.

God is Love. 1 John 4, 8.

QUESTIONS.

1. Why do we say in our Creed, *I* believe? 2. In whom do we believe according to the First Article? 3. Why do we call God "the Father Almighty"? 4. How does our Catechism explain the words "Maker of heaven and earth"? 5. What are creatures? 6. In how many days did God create heaven and earth? 7. What does it mean when we say God *created* them? 8. Why do we believe that God made everything out of nothing, merely by His word? 9. Recite Heb. 11, 3. 10. How was everything when God had finished the work of creation? 11. What do we learn of God from Ps. 90, 2? 12. Why is God called the almighty Father? 13. How does the creation show us that God is all-wise? 14. Which other qualities of God do we learn from His work of creation? 15. Why can and will we always trust in the almighty, all-wise, loving, and merciful God?

LESSON 15.

The First Article.

GOD HAS MADE ME AND STILL PRESERVES ME.

Which is the First Article of the Creed?

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that God has made me and all creatures, that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still preserves them.

1. God is the Maker of heaven and earth. I believe that God made all creatures, all things in heaven and earth. He also created *man*. About the creation of man we read in the Holy Scriptures: *"And God said, Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and*

female created He them. And God blessed them; and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Gen. 1, 26—28. *"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."* Gen. 2, 7. There is a *great difference* between the creation of man and the creation of all other visible things. God, so to say, took especial care about this last of all His wonderful works. He did not merely say: Let there be a man, but God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as it were, *deliberated* and *planned* beforehand how to make man. God then formed man, that is, his body, *out of the dust of the ground,* and *breathed the breath of life,* his soul, into his nostrils, his nose, and so man became a living soul. — And what is more, God created man *in His own image, after His likeness.* As God is Lord and Master over all things and governs them, so He gave to man the power to govern all things on earth; He gave him *dominion* over all the creatures on earth, to be lord over this world. God made man in His own image. Adam and Eve were created *holy, without any blemish and sin.* They *knew* and *loved God,* their Creator, and lived according to His holy will. Truly, man is the *foremost of all of God's visible creatures.* God has made all men; therefore I confess, He made *me.*

2. *"I believe,"* I know it to be true from the Word of God, *"that God made me." He has made me by giving me body and soul.* True, God did not make me as He made Adam, by forming my body out of the dust and breathing the breath of life into my nostrils. He made me by giving me body and soul through my parents. Nevertheless it is true that God has made me, that my body and my soul are *the gift of God,* my heavenly Father. I confess: *"The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."* Job 33, 4.

3. How wonderfully did God make me! *"He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my*

reason and all my senses." Consider how beautifully and wonderfully God made your body. He gave you *eyes* and *ears.* You can *see* and *hear;* you can see all the great works of God, the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the animals and plants, the mighty mountains and the vast seas. You can see your fellow-men, your friends and parents, and hear their voices, hear their words that instruct and console you. You can read your Bible and hear the preaching of God's Word. He gave you not only eyes and ears, but *all the members of your body* — your mouth, so that you are able to talk to your friends and parents and make known your needs and wishes; your feet and your hands for your work. — We are wonderfully made. God has given you a *soul,* and He has endowed it with *reason,* and has given you *all your senses.* You are able to *think* about the great works of God that surround you, to try to understand what they are and for what purpose God has created them. You are able to understand all that God tells you in His Word about Himself, His will, and His grace, and thus to know Him. You are able to *feel* His goodness, His fatherly love and mercy. Surely we must say: *"I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvelous are Thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well."* Ps. 139, 14.

4. *"I believe that God has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still preserves them."* Every Christian confesses: God, my Father, *preserves* me, my life, my body and soul, all that I am. God has not made us and given us His great gifts and then left it to us how to preserve and keep them. This we could never do. He is not like a builder who, having finished a house, leaves it and lets others take care of it in the future. *"He is not far from every one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being."* Acts 17, 27. 28. He will preserve us, and He alone, our Almighty Father, can do it. He has preserved me until this day. The fact that I am still enjoying life, that I still have body and soul with all their precious gifts, that I still can see and hear and have the use of my members, that I still have the gift of reason

and the use of my senses, all this is not my work, not due to my prudence, or the care of my parents, or the skill of a physician, *but it is God's work and gift alone. "He upholds all things by the word of His power."* Heb. 1, 3. And I believe that God, my Father, will also in future preserve me, His child, until the hour of death, and that He will then for Christ's sake take me up to heaven, body and soul, and there preserve me forever.

REMEMBER: —

1. *God has made you. He has given you your body and soul, eyes, ears, and all your members, your reason and all your senses. He is your almighty Father.*

2. *God has preserved and still preserves you. That you are still living, that you have body and soul and the use of your reason and all your members, is God's free gift alone. God is your almighty Father.*

3. *How precious are these gifts of God! Never forget how wonderfully you are made. God, your almighty Father, is also a very kind and loving Father.*

MEMORIZE: —

I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvelous are Thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. Ps. 139, 14.

He is not far from every one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being. Acts 17, 27. 28.

He upholds all things by the word of His power. Heb. 1, 3.

QUESTIONS.

1. On which of the six days did God create man? 2. What is the difference between the creation of man and the creation of all other visible creatures? 3. What did God do before He created man? 4. Out of what did He form his body? 5. How did God create his soul? 6. What does it mean that God created man in His own image? 7. How were Adam and Eve after God had created them? 8. How did they show that they were holy and without sin? 9. How did God make *you*? 10. Through whom did He give you body and soul? 11. Which gift did God bestow

upon your body? 12. Why are eyes and ears and all members such wonderful gifts of God? 13. Which is God's greatest gift to your soul? 14. Why is reason His greatest gift? 15. What does God do for us in addition to having created us? 16. What does it mean that God preserves us? 17. Until what day did God preserve you? 18. How long will He preserve you? 19. What, therefore, is God to me because He made me and preserves me?

LESSON 16.

The First Article.

HOW MY HEAVENLY FATHER PROVIDES FOR ME AND GUARDS MY LIFE.

Which is the First Article of the Creed?

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that God has given me also clothing and shoes, meat and drink, house and home, wife and children, fields, cattle, and all my goods; that He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life; that He defends me against all danger, and guards and protects me from all evil.

1. In the First Article of our Christian faith we say: *"I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth."* This means, as we have learned: *I believe that God has made me and has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still preserves them.* God generally does not preserve us by His word and will alone, but through *earthly means.* In order to preserve our life and body, we must eat and drink, have clothing, house and home, etc. True, God could preserve us without these means. He is the Almighty. He has done so at times. He preserved Moses' life for forty days and nights without food and drink on Mount Sinai. Ex. 34, 28. Jesus twice, as you know, fed several thousand people with a few loaves of bread and with a few fish. God can do so to-day,

and He will do it if His children are in need of it. But generally it pleases God to preserve our body and life through outward means. *God preserves me by providing me with all that I need to support my body and life.*

2. I need many things to support my body and life. Our Catechism names quite a number of them. In order to support our life, we must have *meat and drink.* We must have *clothing and shoes, house and home* to protect our bodies from sunshine and rain. True, you have not everything that is named in our Catechism; but all these things are necessary to preserve our lives, and somebody must have them. The farmer must have *fields* and *cattle* to provide for his life and for the lives of many other people. *All my goods,* all that I need and have, clothing and shoes, meat and drink, house and home, father and mother, brothers and sisters, were given me *by God, my heavenly Father. "The eyes of all wait upon Thee, and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing."* Ps. 145, 15. 16.

3. God provides me with all that I need to support my life. God generally does it through *the work of our hands.* He can do it without our work, or labor, and at times has done so. Remember how God gave manna from heaven to the children of Israel when they were in the desert. Deut. 8, 3. 4. Remember how He fed His prophet Elijah during the famine by sending the ravens to bring him his daily bread. 1 Kings 17. God can do the same thing to-day, and He certainly will do so whenever His children are in need of it. *"Cast all your care upon Him; for He careth for you."* 1 Pet. 5, 7. As a rule, however, God wants us to work diligently and carefully to save what we earn. But still it is *God* that provides for us. He gives us strength and health for our work. He blesses our labors. Without His blessing all our labor would be in vain. *"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."* Ps. 127, 1.

4. God provides me with all that I need for my life and body, and He does so *richly and daily.* God provides me *richly.* I have a rich Father. He is the Maker of heaven

and earth. Everything belongs to Him. Out of His abundance He gives us richly all that we need, and often more than we need. He gives us daily, that is, He never tires of giving. Every morning He begins anew to bless us by giving us our daily bread.

5. One thing more is needed to preserve us. Our life and our body are in constant danger. But a child of God confesses: *"He defends me against all danger, and guards and protects me from all evil."* Remember how He defended the children of Israel against their enemies, the Egyptians, at the Red Sea. Ex. 13. 14. Remember how He guarded His Son, the Christ-child, whom King Herod sought to kill. Matt. 2, 13—15. So God defends and guards all His children. *"There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling."* Ps. 91, 10. True, also children of God have to suffer, they have many troubles and misfortunes; but their Father protects them in all these troubles, so that nothing can really harm them, but that everything must work together for good to them. Joseph in Egypt had to suffer much that was meant to do him harm, being cast into prison; but God was with him and made everything turn out for his welfare. He himself said to his brothers: *"Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive."* Gen. 50, 20. — In protecting His children from evil, God often uses His *angels,* those holy spirits whom He has created, and whom He sends out to minister to His children. By an angel God protected Daniel in the den of the lions and the three men in the fiery furnace. He sends His angels to protect us from evil. *"He shall give His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands lest thou dash thy foot against a stone."* Ps. 91, 11. 12.

REMEMBER: —

1. *God preserves you by providing you with all things that you need for your life and body. He does so richly and daily. Therefore trust in Him, your rich and merciful Father.*

2. *God wants you to work diligently and earn your daily bread; He also wants you to be thrifty, saving, with what He has given you. But with all your working and saving you could never provide the necessary food and clothing without God's blessing. He alone provides for you.*

3. *Trust in God! He will defend you against all danger and guard and protect you from all evil. He will send His angels so that no evil may harm you.*

MEMORIZE: —

The eyes of all wait upon Thee, and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. Ps. 145, 15. 16.

Cast all your care upon Him, for He careth for you. 1 Pet. 5, 7.

There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. Ps. 91, 10.

He shall give His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways. Ps. 91, 11.

Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. Ps. 37, 5.

QUESTIONS.

1. How does God preserve you? 2. What must you do to preserve your life and body? 3. Where has God shown that He can preserve us without any means? 4. In what manner does God generally preserve us? 5. Which of the things that are needed to support our life and body does our Catechism mention? 6. Who gave me all the good things I have? 7. In what way does God generally provide us with the things necessary for our life? 8. When, for instance, did God show that He can provide for us without the labor of our hands? 9. What, however, is God's rule in this matter? 10. Can you show that God provides for us even though we work to earn our living? 11. How does God provide you with all that is needed for your life? 12. Why can He provide richly for His children? 13. What more does God do to preserve us? 14. Give examples of God's protecting care over His children. 15. What is our consolation when we have troubles and misfortunes? 16. Whom does God often send forth to protect His children? 17. What do we read Ps. 37, 5?

LESSON 17.

The First Article.

GOD HAS MADE ME AND PRESERVES ME OUT OF FATHERLY, DIVINE GOODNESS AND MERCY.

Which is the First Article of the Creed?

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that God does all this out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me.

1. We have learned that God has *made* me by giving me my body and soul, and that He still *preserves* me by giving me richly and daily all that I need for life and body, by guarding and protecting me from all evil. Now we ask, *Why has God done all this for me?* Our Catechism answers: He has done *"all this purely out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy."* This answer is taken from the Word of God. *"The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works."* Ps. 145, 9. — God is moved by His *goodness* to bestow His manifold blessings on us. *Our God is good.* Ps. 118, 1. He loves all His creatures, especially those whom in Holy Baptism and through faith in Jesus Christ He has accepted as His children. He wishes to make them happy here on earth and, above all, eternally in heaven. He also loves you; therefore He has formed your body so beautifully and given you an immortal soul; therefore He provides you with all that is needed for your life and body, and does this richly and daily.

2. God is moved by His *mercy* to provide for me and protect me. *"His tender mercies are over all His works." Our God is a merciful God.* He knows that without Him, without His provident care, we are helpless, unable to support our life, not even for a single day. And He has compassion on us. He does not like to see His children in need and danger. His tender mercies are over you also; therefore He

feeds and clothes you through your parents or friends; therefore He guards and protects you, His child.

3. His goodness and mercy is *fatherly* goodness and mercy. He provides for me and protects me as a *father* provides for his children and protects them. *"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him."* Ps. 103, 13. Not only in His Word does God assure us that He is our loving Father, but He daily proves it to us by the blessings He sends us. He has given me my beautiful body and a rational soul, that is, powers to think and understand; He daily provides for everything I need; He is at my side in every danger to defend me; from every evil that comes near me He protects me. Surely *God is my Father.* — His goodness and mercy are a *divine* goodness and mercy, such as only God has and can have, a *perfect* and *never-failing* goodness and mercy. My Father is the *Father Almighty,* who daily will and can provide for and protect His children. *"His compassions fail not. They are new every morning."* Lam. 3, 22. — Therefore I confess: *I believe in God, my almighty Father,* that is, I do not only know from the Word of God and from the blessings I am daily receiving from Him that the almighty God is my Father, but *with all my heart I trust in Him,* I confide in Him, I rely on Him as on my true Father. When I am in need, I trust in Him, my Father; He will and can provide for me. When dangers surround me, I trust in Him, my Father; He will and can defend me. When evil seems to come near me, I trust in Him, my Father; He will and can protect me. *To believe in God the Father Almighty means to be fully assured that the almighty God is my Father, and with all my heart to trust in Him who is my Father for Jesus' sake.*

4. Whatever God does for His children, He does *"purely* out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy." His fatherly goodness and mercy — nothing else — moves Him to show us goodness and mercy. He provides and protects me *"without any merit or worthiness in me."* When a man performs some work for another man, he has done something for him and thereby earned, or *merited,* payment for such service. We

have not given anything to God, so that He would be in duty bound to reward us for it. We have not earned His fatherly love, nor can we ever do so. — When a rich man bestows a free gift upon a poor man, this poor man has certainly not merited this gift, but he may be *worthy* of the help. His worthiness may have moved the rich man to take pity on him. We are *not worthy* of anything that God bestows upon us; we do not deserve His fatherly love and kindness. We have transgressed, and daily transgress, His holy commandments. We are sinners. We so often misuse God's kindness and His gifts. If God were to treat us according to our merits and worthiness, He would not be able to bless us, but he would have to punish and condemn us. In us God does not find anything that might move Him to love us and to care for us. It is *purely* out of His fatherly, divine goodness and mercy that He loves me and provides for me, an unworthy sinner. We must confess with Jacob: *"I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which Thou hast showed unto Thy servant."* Gen. 32, 10.

REMEMBER: —

1. *In bestowing all His blessings on me God is moved only by His goodness and mercy, not by any merit or worthiness in me. All I am and all I have and receive is a free gift of His love and kindness.*

2. *God's goodness and mercy are a fatherly and divine goodness and mercy. He daily shows that He is my Father indeed, who loves me and cares for me with a most perfect, never-failing, never-ceasing love.*

3. *To believe in God the Father Almighty means to know and be assured from Scripture that the almighty God is my Father, and with all my heart to trust and confide in Him who is my Father for Christ's sake.*

MEMORIZE: —

The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works. Ps. 145, 9.

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. Ps. 103, 13.

I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which Thou hast showed unto Thy servant. Gen. 32, 10.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, that is, I know and am assured that the almighty God is my Father; with all my heart, therefore, I trust and confide in Him who is my Father for Christ's sake.

QUESTIONS.

1. Who has made you and still preserves you? 2. What moves God to do this? 3. Whom among His creatures does God especially love? 4. How does He show His goodness and love toward His children? 5. What furthermore moves God to care for His children? 6. What does it mean that God is merciful? 7. How are His goodness and mercy called in our Catechism? 8. What do we read Ps. 103, 13? 9. How does God daily show His fatherly goodness toward you? 10. How are His goodness and mercy furthermore called in our Catechism? 11. Why is His goodness called a divine goodness? 12. What do we therefore confess because God daily shows us His fatherly love and mercy? 13. What does this mean, "I believe in God the Father Almighty"? 14. Why may and should we trust and confide in God as in our Father? 15. What does not move God to love us and provide for us? 16. Why do we not merit God's love and kindness? 17. Why are we not worthy of His goodness and mercy? 18. What have we sinners merited? 19. Recite what Jacob said to the Lord. Gen. 32, 10.

LESSON 18.

The First Article.

FOR HIS GOODNESS AND MERCY I WILL THANK AND PRAISE MY FATHER, AND SERVE AND OBEY HIM.

Which is the First Article?

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that for all this it is my duty to thank and praise, to serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

1. Great are the blessings which we daily receive from our heavenly Father. It is He who preserves our bodies and souls. It is He who provides us with all that we need for our lives, and who defends us against all danger and guards and protects us from all evil. And He does all this without any merit or worthiness in me, moved purely by His fatherly, divine goodness and mercy. When we consider all this love and kindness, we ask, *What, then, is our duty toward our Father in heaven? "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?"* Ps. 116, 12. Our Catechism answers: *"For all which it is my duty to thank and praise, to serve and obey Him."*

2. For all His benefits we should, and, most certainly, every child of God gladly will, *thank* our Father. When somebody has shown us a kindness and given us valuable gifts, we certainly thank him. How we do look down with contempt upon an ungrateful person! If we give thanks to our human benefactors, how much more should we thank God, our greatest Benefactor, from whom we receive every good and perfect gift! It is *God's will* that we thank Him. *"O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good, because His mercy endureth forever."* Ps. 118, 1. Remember how well pleased our Lord was with the *grateful Samaritan* who alone of the ten came back to thank Him for the gift of his health. Luke 17, 17—19. To be able to thank God we must *believe in our hearts* that everything that we are, have, and enjoy is God's gracious gift. Very many do not admit this. They boast that they themselves provide for their life by their daily work, that they themselves defend their bodies and souls from danger and evil, and so they do not consider it their duty to thank the Lord. We are assured that all we have is a free gift of God, and therefore we must and will thank Him in all our prayers. Do not forget to do this, especially in your morning and evening prayers, as well as before and after meals. (See the prayers in your Catechism.)

3. *We should praise God, our Father.* With glad and rejoicing hearts we will *tell* others, our fellow-men, of the great and wondrous things the Lord has done for us. We

will *make known* to them what a mighty and wise as well as gracious, merciful, and loving Father our God is, and thus *glorify* His name in the world, also in the presence of *unbelievers. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits!"* Ps. 103, 2. "To God, the Father of all love, the God of earth and heaven, the mighty God who reigns above, be praise and glory given! With healing balm my soul He fills and every pain and sorrow stills: To God all praise and glory!"

4. *It is our duty to serve the Lord.* God, it is true, is not in need of our poor services, for it is He who gives us day by day everything we have. But He has told us in His Word that what we do to our brethren for His sake *we have done unto Him.* Matt. 25, 40. *In serving our brethren we serve God.* We serve Him by not using the gifts we receive from Him merely for our own benefit, much less for sinful purposes, in the service of sin and Satan, but *by using them to help our neighbor in distress.* We serve Him by using our worldly goods *to further our Father's kingdom here on earth, by laboring and giving for His Church, for Foreign and Home Missions, and for all purposes pleasing to God.* In this manner our whole life will be a service and a thank-offering to God, our gracious Father. "O grant that I may through Thy grace use all my powers to show Thy praise, and serve and help my neighbor."

5. *Finally, it is my duty to obey Him, my Father.* I know that God is my Father, and I am His child. How can a child show his love and his gratitude toward his father better *than by obeying him?* So will I render my thanks unto my heavenly Father by cheerfully and willingly obeying Him and by doing according to His commandments. Above all, I will, according to His First Commandment, *love Him and trust in Him,* my Father, in every need and danger, firmly believing that He will never leave nor forsake me.

6. *"This is most certainly true."* With these words we conclude our First Article. These words are the explanation of the word *Amen* which we find at the end of our Creed. *Amen* means: "This is most certainly true." We declare it

to be most certainly true what we have confessed and what we believe. It is most certainly true that God has made me and still preserves me. It is most certainly true that God has given me my body and soul, that He provides for me and defends, guards, and protects me. It is most certainly true that He has done all this purely out of His fatherly, divine goodness and mercy. It is most certainly true that God is my almighty Father whom I, His child, am in duty bound to thank and praise, to serve and obey. *From God's Word we know that all this is most certainly true.*

REMEMBER: —

1. *God is our heavenly Father, our greatest Benefactor; therefore we should thank and praise, serve and obey Him. Let us never forget all His benefits.*

2. *We thank God when we believe and acknowledge it to be true that all we have is the gift of God's goodness and mercy, given us without any merit or worthiness in us. — We praise Him when we glorify Him and His gracious deeds also before our fellow-men.*

3. *We serve our heavenly Father by devoting all the powers of body and soul, all of which are His gifts, not to the service of sin and Satan, but to the service of our fellow-men and of the Church of God. — We obey Him by fulfilling His will, by keeping His commandments, especially by loving Him and trusting in Him.*

MEMORIZE: —

What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? Ps. 116, 12.

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; because His mercy endureth forever. Ps. 118, 1.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits! Ps. 103, 2.

QUESTIONS.

1. Which are the great blessings we receive from God, according to the First Article? 2. What do we ask when we consider these blessings? 3. How is this expressed in Ps. 116, 12? 4. How

does our Catechism answer this question? 5. Why is it our duty to thank God? 6. How can you prove from Scripture that God is pleased with our gratitude? 7. What must we admit in our hearts in order really to thank God? 8. Most men do not admit this; what do they believe regarding their worldly goods? 9. At what time especially should we thank God for His benefits? 10. What does it mean to praise God? 11. Before whom also should we glorify Him? 12. Recite Ps. 103, 2. 13. What, in addition, is our duty towards God? 14. How can we serve our Father? 15. How do you know that you are serving God by serving your neighbor? 16. What should I also do to serve God? 17. What, finally, is our duty towards our Father in heaven? 18. When do we obey Him? 19. How should we obey Him, according to the First Commandment? 20. What do we express in the last words of the First Article? 21. How do we know that everything we have confessed in this article is most certainly true?

LESSON 19.

The First Article.

REVIEW LESSON.

1. We have begun to study the Three Articles of our Creed. These articles contain all that we believe and confess regarding God and His works, all that He has done and will do for us, His children. Where did God reveal Himself and His works to us? What do we call all the doctrines of Scripture that teach us who God is and what He has done for us? What is the meaning of the word *Gospel*? There are two chief doctrines in the Bible. What are they called? What does the Law tell us? What are the good tidings brought to us in the Gospel?

2. We confess in the First Article that God is the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. God is the Maker of heaven and earth. What do we call this great work of God? What is the meaning of the word *create*? What do we call all the things that God has made? What does it mean to say: God created all things *by His word*? In how many days did God create this world, heaven and earth? — When we thoughtfully consider this great work of God, His crea-

tion, we can learn from it how wonderful our God is. What does creation teach us about God? When we say, God is almighty, what does that mean? How does creation teach us that God is an all-wise God? How does creation show us God's great love and kindness toward His creatures? How were all creatures when God had made them?

3. God is the Maker of heaven and earth, He created all things. Therefore He also created man. How did God create the first man? Man is the foremost of all the visible creatures. How do we prove this? In whose image did God make our first parents? In what respect did God make man in His image? How were our first parents when God had made them? Whom did they know and love? How did they live? — God made all men; whom, therefore, did He also make? What did God give me in making me? It is true that God did not make me in the same manner as He made our first parents. Through whom did He give me my body and soul? — Consider how wonderfully God has made you. Why did God give you eyes and ears? What can you do because God endowed your soul with reason? All this proves that we are God's foremost creatures. — God has made you, but what do we furthermore confess? What does this statement mean: God preserves me? What do we read Heb. 1, 3? In whom do we all live and move and have our being?

4. We confess in the First Article that our heavenly Father has made me and all creatures, that He has given me my body with all its members, my soul, my reason and all my senses, and that He still preserves me, so that in Him we live, and move, and have our being. How does God preserve me? From whom do we receive all things to support our body and life? Recite Ps. 145, 15. 16. In what manner does God, as a rule, provide us with all the things that we need to support our body and soul? Why is it that we, nevertheless, must say that God provides for us? What must God also do to preserve my body and life? Whom does God often use to protect His children from danger and evil?

5. God has done great things for me. He has made me, He has given me my body and soul. He still preserves me by

providing daily and richly all that I need for my life and body, by guarding and protecting me from all evil. What moves God to give me all these great benefits? Recite Ps. 145, 9. What does that mean: God is good to all His creatures? Whom especially does God love? What does that mean: God is merciful? How are God's goodness and mercy called in our Catechism? Why is His goodness called a *fatherly* goodness? Why is it called a *divine* goodness? Why do we say that it is *purely* fatherly and divine goodness that moves God? What have we merited by our conduct toward God? Why are we unworthy of all the benefits of God? What must we confess with Jacob? Gen. 32, 10. What do we say by confessing: "I believe in God the Father Almighty"?

6. Great are the blessings which we have received, and daily are receiving, from our heavenly Father. And He gives all His blessings out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. What, therefore, is our duty over against God? We should, in the first place, thank our Father. What do we think of an ungrateful person? What do we read Ps. 118, 1? With whom was our Lord well pleased? Why are so many men not thankful to God? When only shall we be truly thankful? — In the second place, we should praise our Father. What does it mean to praise God? Before whom also should we glorify God? — In the third place, we should serve God in order to show Him our gratitude. How can we serve God although He is not in need of our services? How ought we to use all the gifts of God in order to serve Him? — Lastly, we should obey our Father. When do we obey Him? Which commandment, especially, should we keep? What does this commandment require of us? Why do we close the First Article with the words: "This is most certainly true"?

We all believe in one true God,
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Present Helper in all need,
Praised by all the heavenly host,
By whose mighty power alone
All is made and wrought and done.

LESSON 20.

The Second Article: Of Redemption.

I BELIEVE THAT MY LORD JESUS CHRIST IS TRUE GOD.

Which is the Second Article?

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.

What does this mean?

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, . . . is my Lord.

1. *"I believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord,"* thus the Second Article of our Creed begins. Every true Christian, every child of God, confesses: I believe in my Lord Jesus Christ. I believe that Jesus Christ is my Lord. We do not only believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, but likewise in our Lord Jesus Christ. You know what it means to believe in Jesus Christ. It means, I know and am assured by God's Word that Jesus Christ is my Lord, and with all my heart I trust and confide in Him as in my Lord. Our Catechism teaches us *two things* about our Lord Jesus Christ: 1. *who our Lord Jesus Christ is,* and 2. *what He has done for me to become my Lord.*

2. *Who is our Lord Jesus Christ?* We confess: *"I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son,"* that is, God the Father's only Son. Many are called, and in truth are, God's children. *"Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."* Gal. 3, 26. All who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ are sons and daughters of God. How, then, can we say that Jesus Christ is God's only Son? Our Catechism says: *"I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, is my Lord."* All those who believe in Christ are God's children; God has *adopted* them as His children for Christ's sake. Christ, however, is God's *own Son, begotten, born of the Father from eternity.* Before God created heaven and earth, Christ was God's Son, begotten of the Father. God Himself says to this His only Son: *"Thou art My Son; this day* [that is, from eternity] *have I begotten Thee."* Ps.

2, 7. *"God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* John 3, 16. Christ is God's Son, begotten of the Father from eternity, and it is for this reason, too, that in the First Article we call God the *Father*. He is the Father of His own only Son, through whom He is also our Father.

3. Whoever is born of human parents is a true man; he has a human body and a human soul. Our Lord Jesus Christ is born of the Father from eternity, and therefore *He is true God*. We confess that we believe in Jesus Christ, true God. He is true God in the same sense as the Father is true God. *Together with the Father He is the one true God.* He Himself has said: *"He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."* John 14, 9. *"I and My Father are one."* John 10, 30. The Father is the *almighty* God; likewise the Son, our Lord, is the *almighty* God. *"All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth."* Matt. 28, 18. God the Father is always with us wherever we are; likewise the Son, our Lord, is with us always. *"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."* Matt. 28, 20. God the Father has created all things; likewise the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. *"All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made."* John 1, 3. He tells us that we should *honor* Him as we honor the Father. *"All men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father."* John 5, 23. He tells us that we should *believe* in Him as we believe in the Father. *"Ye believe in God, believe also in Me."* John 14, 1.

4. Jesus Christ is true God from eternity. When our Lord was dwelling here on earth among men, He *showed* that He was true God. His apostle John tells us: *"We* [the apostles] *beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father."* John 1, 14. With His almighty word He healed the sick, He made the blind to see, the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, He brought the dead to life again: the daughter of Jairus, the son of the widow in Nain, and Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha. Remember how the winds and the sea obeyed Him, how He stilled the storm

and walked on the sea as on dry land, how He changed water into wine.

5. *Our Lord Jesus Christ is true God, the only-begotten Son of the Father.* His disciples confessed it time and again. Simon Peter confessed regarding the Lord: *"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."* Matt. 16, 16. Thomas said to Him, *"My Lord and my God."* John 20, 28. And Jesus was well pleased with their confessions and accepted them. *"This* [our dear Lord] *is the true God and eternal life," is what John the Apostle tells of Him.* 1 John 5, 20. And St. Paul writes: *"Who* [Christ] *is over all, God blessed forever."* Rom. 9, 5. *From our Bible, from the Word of God,* we know it to be most certainly true that our Lord is true God, begotten of the Father from eternity.

6. Never forget that our dear Lord, together with the Father, is the one true God. *Therefore I believe in Him and trust in Him with all my heart.* In every need and trouble, in every danger, I lift up my hands to my Lord and God and *pray* to Him. He will not forsake me, for He is *"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and to-day and forever."* Heb. 13, 8.

REMEMBER: —

1. *Our Lord Jesus Christ is the only Son of God the Father, His own Son, begotten of the Father from eternity.*

2. *Our Lord Jesus Christ is true God, with God the Father the one true God in whom we believe, and to whom we pray.*

3. *This we know and believe because God Himself has revealed it to us in His holy Word. Our confession is and always shall be: "I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son." I believe that Jesus Christ is true God, begotten of the Father from eternity.*

MEMORIZE: —

This is the true God and eternal life. 1 John 5, 20.

Who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. Rom. 9, 5.

Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God. John 20, 28.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3, 16.

All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Matt. 28, 18.

Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Matt. 28, 20.

QUESTIONS.

1. What does it mean to believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord? 2. What two things does our Catechism teach us about our Lord Jesus Christ? 3. Whose only Son is Jesus Christ? 4. Who also are God's children? 5. Why is Jesus called God's *only* Son? 6. Where in the Bible is Christ called the only-begotten Son of God? John 3, 16. 7. Christ is the own, the only-begotten Son of God; what must He therefore be? 8. What is Christ together with the Father? 9. Where does our Lord Himself say so? 10. Where does our Lord say that He is almighty? 11. Where does He promise that He will always be with us? 12. What great work of God the Father is also done by the Son? 13. How should we honor the Son? 14. How did Christ show, when He was dwelling visibly on earth, that He is true God? 15. What did Peter confess of the Lord? 16. What did Thomas say to Him? 17. What does the Apostle John write about the Lord? 18. What does St. Paul write? 19. How do we know that it is most certainly true that Christ is true God? 20. What must our confession regarding Christ always be?

LESSON 21.

The Second Article.

I BELIEVE THAT MY LORD IS TRUE GOD AND TRUE MAN.

Which is the Second Article?

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried.

What does this mean?

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord.

1. We confess that Jesus Christ is the only Son of God, begotten of the Father from eternity and therefore true God.

We also confess *that He is born of the Virgin Mary and therefore is a true man,* with a human soul and a human body. Holy Scripture expressly calls our Lord a man. *"There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."* 1 Tim. 2, 5. Our Lord is indeed true man. While He was visibly dwelling here on earth, He lived as a man among men. He was born in Bethlehem as a little child. In the house of His mother and His foster-father Joseph He grew up like other children. He became hungry and thirsty, He ate and drank, He grew tired and slept, and, lastly, He died.

2. Christ, our Lord, is *true* man, man in the true sense of the word. He is our Brother. But there is *one great difference* between Him and all other men. We confess in the Second Article that He was *conceived by the Holy Ghost.* Though our Lord was born of a human mother, He did not have a human father. He was conceived by the power of God the Holy Ghost without sin. *"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee* [the Virgin Mary], *and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."* Luke 1, 35. Christ, our Lord, was born *holy, without sin,* and during His life He never committed any sin, but always fulfilled the will of God, His Father.

3. Christ, our Lord, is true God and true man. There are not two Christs, one who is God, and another who is man, but *only one Christ, who is God and man at the same time, God and man in one person, the God-man.* He is *Emmanuel,* that is, God with us, God in our flesh and blood. Matt. 1, 23. How this is possible we cannot understand, but we firmly believe it because God Himself has revealed it to us in His Word. The Son of God, the true God, became a true man, born of a woman. *"The Word* [the Son of God] *was made flesh* [man], *and dwelt among us."* John 1, 14.

4. The Son of God, the true God, became man, but more than that. *He also humbled Himself.* He did not, as a rule, show forth His divine glory nor use His divine powers, but

was like any other man. He did not come to us as a great prince, in kingly splendor, but though He is our God and King, He came to us *as a low, poor man.* From Bible History you know the life of the God-man, how He was *born* a little child in Bethlehem, of the Virgin Mary, a lowly maid in Israel, though she came from the royal house of the great King David. And after He was born, He *suffered.* His whole life was a constant suffering. He was despised by His people, persecuted by the priests and Pharisees. He was so poor that He did not have where to lay His head. Remember how He suffered that unspeakable agony in the Garden of Gethsemane and in the courts of His enemies, where they passed that cruel sentence of death upon Him who had never committed a sin. And *under Pontius Pilate,* the governor of Judea, He was *crucified,* nailed to a cross. And on the cross He *died,* died the death of a criminal. And after His death His friends *buried* His body, just as they would have buried that of any other man. Verily, the Son of God, our Lord, *deeply humbled Himself;* He humbled Himself unto death, even the death of the cross.

5. *Why did our Lord do all this?* Why did the Son of God become man? Why did our Lord humble Himself so deeply? He did it for our sake, for the sake of all men, for those who are His enemies. *He did it for me that He might become my Lord and Savior.* Therefore our Lord was called *Jesus.* This name means helper, savior. It was given to our Lord by the will of God; for He had an angel tell Joseph: *"She* [the Virgin Mary] *shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins."* Matt. 1, 21. Jesus is our Savior. — Our Lord is also called *Christ.* Christ means the *Messiah.* Our Lord is the Messiah whom God had promised to His people in the Old Testament. All the prophecies regarding the Messiah in the Old Testament have been fulfilled in Jesus Christ, our Lord. — Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Savior, and He is our *only* Savior. *"Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."* Acts 4, 12.

REMEMBER: —

1. *Our Lord Jesus Christ is true God, born of the Father from eternity; but He is also true man, born in time of the Virgin Mary. He is like unto other men, except that He is holy and without sin.*

2. *Christ, our Lord, is true God and true man in one person — the God-man. As such He is my Savior.*

3. *The Son of God did not only become man, He also humbled Himself, suffering and dying, dying on the cross.*

4. *Christ, our Lord, has done all this to be Jesus, the Savior of all men, to be Christ, the promised Messiah. He has done all this for me that He might become my Lord.*

MEMORIZE: —

There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. 1 Tim. 2, 5.

The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1, 14.

She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins. Matt. 1, 21.

Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Acts 4, 12.

QUESTIONS.

1. What do we confess regarding our Lord? 2. What do we also confess? 3. Recite the passage of Scripture where Christ is expressly called man. 4. How did our Lord show in His life here on earth that He was truly a man? 5. By whom was Christ conceived? 6. How was He, therefore, when He was born? 7. What, therefore, is the difference between Him and all other men? 8. We confess that Christ is God and man. What do we mean by this? 9. What did the Son of God become? 10. How do we read John 1, 14? 11. Our Lord became true man; what did He also do? 12. What did He, as a rule, not show and use while He was here on earth? 13. What kind of man did our Lord become? 14. How was He born? 15. What was His whole life here on earth? 16. How poor did He become? 17. How did He die? 18. Why did Christ do all this? 19. For whose sake also did He humble Himself? 20. Why is my Lord called Jesus? 21. Why is He called the Christ?

LESSON 22.

The Second Article.

MY LORD HAS REDEEMED ME, A LOST AND CONDEMNED CREATURE.

Which is the Second Article?

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.

What does this mean?

I believe that Jesus Christ is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil.

1. We have learned that our Lord is true God and true man. We have heard that the Son of God became man and humbled Himself even unto death for our sake to become our Lord and Savior. Our Catechism furthermore tells us *by what means Jesus Christ, true God and true man, became my Lord and Savior.* That is the great work of our Lord: He came into this world to save, to redeem us. His work is our *redemption.* Let us diligently and prayerfully consider this great work of our Lord — our redemption.

2. *Christ has redeemed me,* so I confess. We were in great need of such a Lord and of the redemption which He was to bring. For without such a Lord *we are lost and condemned creatures.* We are *lost* creatures. What does this mean? Remember the beautiful story of the *Prodigal Son.* The father in this story said of his son after his return that he had been lost. Wilfully and sinfully the son had left his home and his father and gone into a far country, where he spent all his goods with riotous living. He was now far away from his father, separated from him and his home. He was lost in that far-away country, where great misery and distress soon overtook him. Without his father he would have *perished* with hunger. Thus we are lost without Christ. We have sinned against our heavenly Father, we have transgressed His commandments. By committing sins we have left our Father and are separated from Him. We are in

a far-away country, in this sinful world, where misery and distress surround us. We are without God and without hope in the world. Without our Lord we must perish, suffer eternal death. *Without Christ we are indeed lost.* Every one of us must confess: I am a lost creature. *"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way."* Is. 53, 6.

3. I confess also that I am a *condemned* creature. God, as you have learned, is a righteous and jealous God. He *threatens to punish* all that transgress His commandments. When Adam and Eve transgressed God's command, the threatened punishment came over them. *"In the day that thou eatest thereof,"* God had told Adam, *"thou shalt surely die."* Gen. 2, 17. *Death* is the punishment of all sinners, not only death here on earth, but *eternal death,* that is, *eternal damnation.* That is the sentence which God passed upon all that have sinned, that they should be separated from Him in eternity, from Him in whom alone we find life and true happiness. — It was the *devil* that tempted Adam and Eve to sin. They heard and obeyed his voice instead of the voice of their Father. He became their lord and master. *"He that committeth sin is of the devil."* 1 John 3, 8. Because we have sinned, we are under the power of the devil, we belong to his kingdom. Without Christ we are all lost and condemned creatures, that is, *we are separated from God, our Father; we are under God's judgment of damnation; we are under the powers of sin, death, and the devil. They are our masters. "We were by nature the children of wrath."* Eph. 2, 3.

4. I am a lost and condemned creature; I am in the power of sin, death, and the devil. *Who can help me in this misery and redeem and save me?* Surely not I myself. How could I deliver myself from these mighty enemies? I have nothing with which I might atone for my sins or remove God's wrath and curse. Neither can any other man help me, powerful and wise though he may be. *All* men are lost and condemned creatures, just as helpless as I am. *There is only One who is able to help and redeem us, Jesus Christ, our*

Lord. He is the *God-man.* He alone could conquer these fearful enemies, sin, death, and the devil. He is the *almighty God.* He alone among men is *without sin,* and therefore not in the power of the devil. He can redeem me, *and He has redeemed me.* In order to redeem the world, the Son of God became man, humbled Himself, and suffered and died. Thankfully I confess *that Christ has redeemed me, that He is my Lord.*

5. I confess that Christ, my Lord, has redeemed me. But not only me did He redeem, but *all men,* from Adam up to the last man that will be born before the Day of Judgment. God loved the *world,* all *mankind,* and He so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son to redeem and save the world. All men are lost and condemned creatures, all are under God's wrath and in the power of sin, and our Savior Himself said: *"The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost."* Matt. 18, 11. John the Baptist pointed to Him and said: *"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."* John 1, 29. *"He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."* 1 John 2, 2. Christ, my Lord, has redeemed all mankind, and therefore I know that it is most certainly true: *He has redeemed also me.*

REMEMBER: —

1. *Without Christ, my Lord, I am a lost and condemned creature. I am without God and hope in this world, separated from God and under the sentence of damnation.*

2. *By nature I am in the power of sin, death, and the devil. I belong to Satan's kingdom. Sin, death, and the devil were my masters.*

3. *In this dreadful distress no man was able to help me. Only Christ could redeem me, for He is the God-man; and He has redeemed me and all the world.*

MEMORIZE: —

He that committeth sin is of the devil. 1 John 3, 8.

The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost. Matt. 18, 11.

Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. John 1, 29.

He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. 1 John 2, 2.

QUESTIONS.

1. What do we call the great work which Christ has done for us and all men? 2. What do I confess in the Second Article concerning myself? 3. From which parable of our Lord do we learn what it means to be lost? 4. Why was the Prodigal Son called lost? 5. How did he become separated from his father? 6. What happened to him in that far-away country? 7. How did we become separated from our heavenly Father? 8. What always separates us from God? 9. What do we furthermore confess concerning ourselves? 10. Why are we condemned creatures? 11. What does God threaten to those who transgress His commandments? 12. In what does the punishment of sin consist? 13. What death is meant? 14. Who tempted Adam and Eve to sin? 15. Of whom is he who commits sin? 16. Under whose power are we because we have sinned? 17. Who alone is able to help us in our misery? 18. Why can Jesus Christ surely help and save us? 19. Whom did Christ redeem? 20. How can you prove from Scripture that Christ has redeemed all men?

LESSON 23.

The Second Article.

CHRIST, MY LORD, HAS REDEEMED ME WITH HIS HOLY, PRECIOUS BLOOD.

Which is the Second Article?

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.

What does this mean?

I believe that Jesus Christ is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death.

1. Christ has redeemed and *purchased us,* that is, He bought us. Our Lord had to pay a price, a very high price, for our redemption. He has purchased or bought me not with *gold* or *silver. "Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold."* 1 Pet. 1, 18. Gold and silver are, indeed, highly prized among men. Much can be accomplished, much can be bought with gold and silver for the support of our life and for our comfort here in this world. But all the gold and silver, all the treasures in the world, cannot buy our redemption. Gold and silver cannot redeem one lost and condemned sinner from sin, death, and the powers of the devil, from hell and damnation. A much higher price was necessary. Our Lord has paid this price.

2. Christ redeemed and purchased us with His *blood.* He shed His blood for us. He gave His *life* for our redemption. Consider the great love of our Lord. He gave His life not for His friends, but for us, who were His enemies. We call this blood a *holy* blood. *It is the blood of a holy man.* Our Savior was born without sin, and He never committed a sin in His life. We have been redeemed, not with gold or silver, *"but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."* 1 Pet. 1, 19. We call the blood of Christ a *precious* blood. This blood is the most precious thing in heaven and earth. It is the *blood of the Son of God,* shed for our sins. *"The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin."* 1 John 1, 7.

3. Christ purchased us with His blood *and with His suffering and death.* Suffering and dying our Lord shed His blood for us. We say it was an *innocent* suffering and death, because He did not deserve this. He was without sin, He never did any wrong. He did not suffer and die because of any guilt of His own. He suffered and died *on account of my guilt and the guilt of the whole world.* During His whole sinless life He fulfilled God's commandments. *We* ought to have kept the commandments, but we could not do it because we were born in sins. Christ, our Lord, has fulfilled the Law of God *for us, in our stead.* He came into this world and

was made under the Law that He might redeem us, who were under the Law. *We* had transgressed the commandments, therefore the wrath of God was upon us, and we deserved His punishment. *We* ought to have suffered death, eternal death. *Christ* was *innocent,* without sin, and still He suffered death on the cross. *He did all this for us, in our stead. "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.... He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed."* Is. 53, 4. 5. — It was a high price that Jesus paid for our salvation. He gave Himself for us. How thankful we ought to be to our dear Savior, who lived and died for us that we may be saved! How thankful we ought to be to our heavenly Father, who *"so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life"!* John 3, 16.

4. Christ paid a high price for me. He gave Himself a ransom for my salvation. But before His death on the cross my Savior cried out: *"It is finished."* His great work is finished indeed. My Lord *has* purchased and redeemed me and all mankind. Because Christ shed His precious blood, and suffered and died for us in our stead, we are redeemed and free from *our sins.* By leading a sinless life Christ has fulfilled all commandments of God for us; *in Him we have fulfilled them.* We are free from the curse of the Law. *"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us."* Gal. 3, 13. All the punishments for our sins were suffered by Christ. *In Him God has punished us,* and therefore we no longer need to suffer punishment for our sins. — We have been redeemed from *all* sins. There is not a single sin, either great or small, from which Christ, our Lord, has not redeemed us. *He has earned forgiveness of all sins for us.*

5. The penalty of sin is *death,* eternal death and damnation. Christ, our Lord, has taken away our sins, He has earned forgiveness for us; therefore *we have been redeemed from death.* He has suffered death for us, and therefore we

are free from death. Eternal death has no power over us; for *"Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light."* 2 Tim. 1, 10. We no longer need to fear death. In death our Lord gives us everlasting life.

6. Since Christ has suffered and died for us, *we have also been redeemed from the power of the devil.* Through sin the devil has power over us. Our sins are forgiven; by His death the Lord *destroyed the works of the devil.* Satan has lost his power over me. He cannot force me to sin nor keep me in his kingdom. *"Through death He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."* Heb. 2, 14. We thank the Lord for having redeemed us from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil.

REMEMBER: —

1. *I have been bought with a price. My Lord has purchased me, not with treasures of this world, but with His own precious blood, with His innocent suffering and death.*

2. *In my stead Christ fulfilled all the commandments of God. In my stead He suffered and died for my sins. With His stripes I am healed.*

3. *Now I am redeemed and free from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil. In Christ I have forgiveness of all my sins.*

MEMORIZE: —

Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot. 1 Pet. 1, 18. 19.

The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sins. 1 John 1, 7.

Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. Is. 53, 4. 5.

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us. Gal. 3, 13.

Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light. 2 Tim. 1, 10.

QUESTIONS.

1. What does it mean when we say that the Lord purchased us? 2. Wherein did the price which He paid for us not consist? 3. With what did our Lord redeem us? 4. Why do we call His blood a holy blood? 5. Why do we call it a precious blood? 6. What do we read 1 John 1, 7? 7. Why do we call the suffering and death of our Lord an innocent suffering and death? 8. Why did our Lord not deserve suffering and death? 9. For whom did He suffer and die? 10. What did Christ during His whole life fulfil? 11. For whom did He do this? 12. What did we deserve for our sins? 13. Who suffered the punishment we had deserved in our stead? 14. What does the prophet say Is. 53, 4. 5? 15. What do we know regarding this great work of our Lord? 16. From what have we been redeemed? 17. What did Christ earn for us with regard to our sins? 18. From what have we also been redeemed? 19. What need we no longer fear? 20. In what respect are we redeemed also from the power of the devil?

LESSON 24.

The Second Article.

MY LORD HAS WON ME THAT I MAY BE HIS OWN.

Which is the Second Article?

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.

What does this mean?

I believe that Jesus Christ is my Lord, who has won me, that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness.

1. Christ, my Lord, has redeemed and purchased me, and we add: *He has won me.* He has won me after a hard fight with sin, death, and the devil. In the first prophecy of the promised Messiah, God said to the serpent, to Satan: *"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel."* Gen. 3, 15. This prophecy has been fulfilled in the coming of Christ, our Lord. He is the *Seed of*

the woman. The serpent, Satan, indeed, bruised His heel. Christ had to suffer and die for us. But through His death on the cross our Lord has gained the victory. He has bruised the serpent's head and destroyed his works. He has delivered us out of the hand of our enemies. Sin, death, and the devil no longer have any power over us. Christ has won us for Himself. *He has become my Lord. I now am His own,* I belong to Him, to Him alone, who has bought me and won me. *Christ has won me in order that He may be my Lord and I His own.*

2. Christ, my Lord, has won me that I may *live in His kingdom.* Without Christ we are all in Satan's kingdom, living under him. He is our evil master, who rules over us. But Christ has delivered us out of the hand of our enemies that we should live in His kingdom. — *Our Lord has a kingdom here on earth.* For the purpose of founding this His kingdom, He came into the world and humbled Himself, and suffered and died for us. Our Lord, truly, is a King. He Himself told us so. When Pontius Pilate asked Him, *"Art Thou a king, then?"* He answered: *"Thou sayest that I am a King."* To His kingdom all those belong who believe and trust in Him and accept Him as their Lord and King. For this purpose my Lord redeemed and won me, that I, too, may belong to His kingdom and live under Him.

3. The kingdom of our Lord and King is a *most glorious kingdom.* The Lord Himself reigns and rules in His kingdom with His grace and love. In His kingdom we live *under Him.* He rules and governs my whole life. Under His rule and care I shall not want. I live under Him, under His protection. He protects me from the temptations of sin, the godless world, and the devil. My Lord and King is always with me. Under His care and protection I am *safe;* for my King is *the almighty God, whom nothing can withstand.* All power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth. Matt. 28, 18. *This kingdom of our Lord we call the Kingdom of Grace;* for with grace and love our King governs all who accept Him as their Lord and King.

4. For this purpose Christ has redeemed and won me, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and *serve Him,* who has become my Lord. Before Christ became our Lord, we had other masters. We served our enemies, sin and the devil. We could not but serve them, and we served them willingly, even joyfully. How miserable to be a servant of Satan and sin, to do their will, to obey them! *The wages of sin is death,* eternal death and damnation. Our Lord has delivered us from sin and Satan, He has won us as His own. *"That we, delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life."* Luke 1, 74. 75. We live in the kingdom of our Lord under His care; we need not fear our enemies if we do not serve them. We serve Him who has delivered us. In His kingdom our Lord gives us *strength* to serve Him by living according to His commandments, by doing His good and gracious will. To serve this Lord is a *noble* service. Can there be a nobler service than to serve God, the highest Lord, to serve the highest King, who has bought and won us out of the hands of our enemies, of sin and Satan? *Gladly* and *joyfully* will we serve Him, our Savior and our Lord.

5. We serve our Lord *in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness.* The kingdom of our Lord is, indeed, a glorious kingdom. In His kingdom we serve Him in *righteousness.* We are not righteous in ourselves, but our Lord has gained a perfect righteousness for us. He has fulfilled the Law in our stead. Clothed in Christ's blood and righteousness, we serve our Lord, and therefore our poor service is *well-pleasing* to God. — We serve our Lord in *innocence.* We are free from the guilt of our sins. Sad to say, we daily sin in the service of our Lord, we deserve nothing but punishment; but God *forgives us our sins* daily and richly for Christ's sake, and so we are *innocent* in His sight. In holiness and righteousness we will serve Him all the days of our life. — We serve Him in *blessedness.* It is blessedness to serve this our Lord. He blesses His servants

with all His rich gifts. He blesses them here on earth and leads them to eternal blessedness in heaven. It is *everlasting* righteousness and innocence and blessedness that our Lord gives us. He leads His servants to *His kingdom in heaven.* Here in this world His kingdom is a *Kingdom of Grace;* in heaven it is the *Kingdom of Glory. "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom; to whom be glory forever and ever! Amen."* 2 Tim. 4, 18.

REMEMBER: —

1. *Through His sufferings and death, Christ has become my Lord, and therefore I am His own. I am living in His kingdom, under Him, my King, being delivered from the hands of all my enemies. He cares for me and protects me.*

2. *In His kingdom I am serving my King in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, which He bestows on me. For my Lord's sake God forgives me all my sins and accepts my poor sinful service.*

3. *Our Lord's kingdom is a twofold kingdom, the Kingdom of Grace here on earth, in which our King reigns with His grace, with forgiveness of sins, and the Kingdom of Glory in heaven, in which we shall reign with our King, freed from all evil, in His glory forever and ever.*

MEMORIZE: —

I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel. Gen. 3, 15.

Pilate, therefore, said unto Him, Art Thou a king, then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest, I am a King. John 18, 37.

That we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life. Luke 1, 74. 75.

The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom; to whom be glory forever and ever! Amen. 2 Tim. 4, 18.

QUESTIONS.

1. From whom has our Lord won me? 2. To whom do I now belong? 3. Recite the first prophecy of the promised Messiah. 4. Who has no power over me since Christ has won me? 5. In whose kingdom may I live? 6. What does it mean to live under Him? 7. What will our Lord do as our King? 8. Why are we safe under His rule and protection? 9. How do we call His kingdom here on earth? 10. Because Christ is our Lord, what should we therefore do? 11. Whom must we serve when we are not in our Lord's service? 12. Why is this service a miserable service? 13. Why can we now serve our Lord? 14. Why is His service a glorious service? 15. Who has given us the righteousness in which we serve our Lord? 16. Why are we innocent before God? 17. Why is it blessedness to serve the Lord? 18. How do we call His kingdom in heaven?

LESSON 25.

The Second Article.

REVIEW LESSON.

(1) 1. In whom does every Christian believe according to the Second Article? 2. What do we mean when we say: I believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord? 3. What two things does our Catechism teach us about our Lord Jesus Christ? 4. What do we confess in the Second Article concerning the *person* of our Lord? 5. Prove from Scripture that Christ is God's only Son, the only-begotten Son of the Father. 6. If Christ is God's only-begotten Son, He must be true God with the Father. How can you prove this from Holy Writ? 7. How did the apostles confess Jesus Christ as their God? 8. What do we confess about our Lord in the beginning of the explanation of the Second Article? 9. Together with whom is Christ true God? 10. In what respect is there no difference between Jesus and His Father? Christ is coequal with the Father. He has the same divine majesty, glory and honor.

(2) We confess that Jesus Christ is God's only Son and therefore, together with the Father, true God from eternity. 1. What do we furthermore confess concerning our Lord? 2. How can you prove that Christ is true man? 3. Christ is

indeed true man, born of the Virgin Mary. But there is one great difference between Him and all other men. Which is it? 4. Why was Christ conceived and born without sin? 5. Christ is true God and true man; there are, however, not two Christs, one true God and the other true man; there is but *one* Christ. What is He? 6. The Son of God became true man, but He did more. What kind of a man did He become? 7. How does the Second Article describe the lowly life of our Savior here on earth? 8. Why did Christ humble Himself so deeply? 9. What does the name Jesus mean? 10. Why is He called Savior? 11. Why was Jesus called the Christ?

(3) We learn from our Catechism not only who Jesus, our Lord, is, but also what He has done for us to become our Lord. 1. What does our Catechism say concerning the work of our Lord? 2. Christ has redeemed me; how do we therefore call His work? 3. Why was it necessary that I should be redeemed? We are by nature lost and condemned creatures. 4. From which parable of the Lord can you learn what it means to be lost? 5. Why are we also condemned creatures? 6. Who had pronounced judgment upon us because of our sins? 7. What was this punishment? 8. We were under the power of sin, death, and the devil. Who alone could help us in this distress? 9. We confess that Christ redeemed me, a lost and condemned sinner; but I am not the only one whom He has redeemed. Whom did He also redeem? 10. Prove from Scripture that our Lord redeemed all men. 11. What conclusion may and should I draw from this truth?

(4) Our Catechism says that our Lord has redeemed and *purchased* us. 1. What is the meaning of the Word purchase? 2. Christ has bought us with a price. What is the price our Lord paid for our redemption? 3. Why could we not be bought with gold or silver? 4. We have been purchased with His blood. How did Christ purchase us with His blood? 5. It is, indeed, a high price which our Lord paid for us. Why do we call His blood a holy blood? 6. Why is it called a precious blood? 7. What does Christ's blood do for us regarding our sins? 8. Christ has purchased us with His suf-

fering. Why do we call His suffering an innocent suffering? 9. In whose stead did Christ suffer all the punishment of sin? 10. What is the punishment of sin? — 11. Christ has purchased us with His holy blood and His innocent suffering. From whom did He purchase us? Christ redeemed us from the power of sin, and death, and the devil. 12. How did Christ redeem us from all sins? 13. What did He fulfil in our stead? 14. Why are we also free from death? 15. Being free from sin we are also free from the power of the devil. Why are we free from his power?

(5) Christ, our Lord, has redeemed and purchased us. He has also *won* us. He has won us after a severe fight with sin, death, and the devil. 1. Which is the first prophecy of this conflict between our Savior and the devil? 2. Christ gained the victory in this conflict. He won us. To whom do we now belong? 3. We are Christ's own; we live in His kingdom. To whose kingdom do we belong without Christ? 4. Christ has won me from the power and the kingdom of the devil; Christ now is my King. Who belongs to His kingdom? 5. What do we call His kingdom here on earth? 6. Why do we call it the Kingdom of Grace? 7. In His kingdom we live under Him. What does this mean? 8. Not only do we live under our King, under His care and protection, we also serve Him. How do we serve Him? 9. Out of whose hand has our Lord delivered us? 10. How do we serve our Lord? 11. Without Christ we had to serve sin and the devil. Why is this service such a degrading service? 12. Why should we gladly and willingly serve our Lord in His kingdom? 13. We serve our Lord in righteousness, innocence, and blessedness. Which righteousness is here meant? 14. In what respect are we innocent in the eyes of God? 15. Why does His service bestow blessedness upon us? 16. To what kingdom does our gracious Lord lead us after this life? 17. Why is this kingdom called the Kingdom of Glory?

Let us give thanks to our dear Savior, who has become our Lord, that we may be His own and in His kingdom live under Him and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness. Amen.

LESSON 26.

The Second Article.

HOW OUR LORD AS VICTOR DESCENDED INTO HELL AND ROSE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD.

Which is the Second Article?

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. . . . He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead.

1. We believe and confess in the Second Article of our faith that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, became also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, that He suffered, was crucified, died on the cross, and was buried. All this our Lord has done to redeem us lost and condemned creatures from all our sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, that He may be our Lord, that we may be His own and live under Him in His glorious kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness and blessedness. Our Lord died and was buried for our sakes to redeem us. Is, then, our Lord still in death and in the grave? Do we believe in a dead savior? Do we serve a dead and helpless king? Thank God, we do not! *We know from Holy Writ that our Lord came to life again, that our living Lord descended into hell and on the third day after His death rose again from the grave.*

2. We confess in the Second Article: *"He,"* our Lord Jesus Christ, *"descended into hell."* When our Lord descended into hell, He was no longer dead. It is true, when they took Him from the cross and buried Him, He was really dead. Nobody, indeed, had taken His life from Him, He had laid it down of Himself, of His own free will, laid it down for us that we might not suffer eternal death; *but in His grave Christ, the Son of God, took His life back again. "Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened* [came to life again] *by the Spirit."* 1 Pet. 3, 18. As our living Lord He went down into hell, into the place whither the evil spirits, the devils and condemned men, have been ban-

ished. Christ did not enter the gates of hell *in order to be punished there for His sins;* for our Savior was without sin and blemish. He did not descend into hell *to suffer the penalty for our sins;* this He had already done on the cross. He descended into hell *to show that He had won the victory over the devil and all his hosts.* "He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them." Col. 2, 15. As the triumphant Victor over all His enemies Christ entered hell, the abode of Satan. Now we are certain that the old Evil Foe cannot keep us in his power, that *we are free from hell and damnation.*

3. *On the third day our Lord rose again from the dead.* You have often heard the Easter-Gospel, the joyful tidings of Christ's glorious resurrection: Our Lord is not dead, but He lives. When, very early in the morning, the women came to the grave to anoint the body of their Master, they did not find Him, the grave was empty, and an angel of God brought them the message: *"Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen."* Luke 24, 5. 6. After His resurrection our Lord showed Himself to His disciples as their living Savior. They saw Him, they spoke to Him, and ate with Him. *The Lord convinced them that He was risen.* They are the witnesses of His resurrection. Even the *soldiers* whom the enemies had placed around the grave as a watch, lest His disciples might come by night and steal the body, could not deny that the grave was empty, that the Lord had risen. Matt. 28, 4. 11—15. *We are sure that Christ, our Lord, is not dead, but lives; for God Himself tells us in His Word that Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father.* Rom. 6, 4. Joyously we confess: *"I know that my Redeemer liveth."* Job 19, 25.

4. Christ is risen. He came forth from His sepulcher with *the same body* that was laid in the grave. *The tomb was empty.* The disciples knew Him when He showed Himself. They saw the print of the nails in His hands and His feet and the wound in His side. He let them touch His body in order to convince them that He was not a spirit.

Luke 24, 39. 40. But after His resurrection His body was *glorified;* it was free from all human weakness and sufferings, free from death.

5. *The resurrection of our Savior is full of comfort and consolation for us. "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."* 1 Cor. 15, 17—19. This would be our sad lot if Christ were not risen. All our faith and hope in Him would be in vain. But He *is* risen, and now we know *that He is the true Son of God.* We know that Christ *has gained the victory over all our enemies,* sin, death, and the devil, who could not keep Him in their power. We know that Christ *has paid the penalty for our sins,* that our sins are forgiven. We know that we have a *living* Savior, *who is with us alway,* to govern and protect us in His kingdom. We know that we shall not perish when we die, that our risen Lord will not leave us in the grave, but will *raise us again unto eternal life. "Because I live, ye shall live also."* John 14, 19. Our Lord is risen, and so we put our trust in Him both in life and death. "Jesus, my Redeemer, lives! I, too, unto life must waken; Endless joy my Savior gives; Shall my courage then be shaken? Shall I fear, or could the Head Rise and leave His members dead?"

REMEMBER: —

1. *Christ descended into hell to show Himself as Victor over our enemies, over the devil and all his hosts.*

2. *Christ is risen. We know that our Redeemer lives. We have a living Savior, our sins are forgiven. Our King lives forever; under Him we live in everlasting righteousness and innocence.*

3. *Christ is risen; He has conquered death. Though we must die, He will recall us from our graves and raise us to eternal life and everlasting blessedness.*

MEMORIZE: —

I know that my Redeemer liveth. Job 19, 25.

If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. 1 Cor. 15, 17. 18.

Because I live, ye shall live also. John 14, 19.

QUESTIONS.

1. Where did Christ go after He had come to life again in the grave? 2. Why did Christ not descend into hell? 3. What was His purpose in descending into the abode of Satan? 4. When did our Lord rise from the dead? 5. What message did the angel bring to the women at the grave? 6. Who are the witnesses of His resurrection? 7. How did our risen Lord convince His apostles that He was alive again? 8. Who even could not deny His resurrection? 9. What makes us perfectly certain that Christ is risen and lives forever and ever? 10. How was Christ's body after His resurrection? 11. What does that mean, Christ's body was glorified? 12. What do we know regarding our sins since Christ is risen? 13. What consolation does His resurrection give us for our Christian life? 14. What consolation does it give us in the hour of death?

LESSON 27.

The Second Article.

THE TRIUMPHANT ASCENSION OF OUR LORD.

Which is the Second Article?

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. . . . He ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

What does this mean?

Even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity.

1. After His resurrection our Lord *remained here on earth for forty days.* During these days He repeatedly appeared to His disciples; He showed Himself alive to them by many proofs. He convinced them that He was not dead, but lived. He spoke to them about the kingdom of God,

His kingdom. He finally gave them His great command, or commission, to go out into all the world and preach the Gospel of their living Savior to all men. Acts 1, 3.

2. On the *fortieth day* when the apostles were assembled in Jerusalem, the Lord appeared to them again. He told them: *"Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high."* Luke 24, 49. He commanded His disciples to remain in Jerusalem until they had received the gift of the Holy Ghost, that in His power they might be His witnesses unto the uttermost parts of the earth. Then our Lord led them out to *Mount Olivet,* as far as to *Bethany.* And there He lifted up His hands and blessed them. *While He blessed them, He was parted from His beloved apostles and carried up into heaven.* While the disciples looked on, He was taken up higher and higher, until a cloud received Him out of their sight. Luke 24, 50. 51; Acts 1, 8. 9. In this manner our Lord was received up to His heavenly glory. *Visibly,* before the eyes of His disciples, He ascended on high and entered into the glory of His Father.

3. Christ ascended into heaven, *and He did so for our sake.* He ascended up on high as *the triumphant Victor* over all His and our enemies. His entrance into heaven assures us *that He has opened heaven again for us through His sufferings and death.* Before His death He gave His apostles the promise: *"In My Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you."* John 14, 2. This promise He has fulfilled. He went up to heaven to prepare a place in His Father's house for all who believe in Him, their Savior. — Our Lord ascended into heaven, *and where He is, there shall we, His friends and disciples, also be.* He will not leave us behind in this world. As truly as Christ went up to heaven, we, His own, will follow Him to His and our Father's house. *"Where I am, there shall also My servant be."* John 12, 26. Our Lord prayed for us before His death upon the cross: *"Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me."* John 17, 24.

"Mighty Lord, in Thine ascension we by faith behold our own." — Remember: *Our Treasure, our Lord and Savior, is in heaven, and where our Treasure is, our hearts and hopes should also be.*

4. *"He was received up into heaven and sat on the right hand of God,"* thus we read Mark 16, 19. We, therefore, confess that our ascended Lord now *"sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty."* What does this mean? It does not mean that in heaven, at the right hand of God the Father, there is a special throne, prepared for our Lord, the God-man Jesus Christ, upon which He is now seated in divine glory, adored and praised by all the heavenly hosts, and that, because He is sitting on that throne, He is *far away from us, His own.* It means — and so our Catechism explains it — that our dear Lord, after being raised from the dead, *"lives and reigns to all eternity."* It means that Christ, though He was dead, lives and is alive forevermore, that our living Lord is with us and reigns over us as our gracious King to all eternity. He is, and will be, according to His almighty power, our King forever and ever.

5. Christ, indeed, ascended into heaven. He now is in heaven, in the glory of His Father; *but He is not far away from us. He is with us.* We cannot see Him, as His apostles saw Him, but He is with us *invisibly in His Word, His Gospel.* When we read or hear His Gospel or think about it, our Savior is always at our side. He Himself has promised us: *"I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you."* John 14, 18. — *Our Lord lives and reigns to all eternity,* that is, He rules and governs us, His own, His disciples. He leads and protects us against all our enemies. Out of His almighty hand no enemy can pluck us. Our mighty Lord on God's throne is our Good Shepherd, who leads us in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Ps. 23. — Christ's resurrection, His ascension, and His sitting at the right hand of God assure us of the fact that He is indeed our Lord, and will be our Lord and King to eternity; and in His kingdom we shall live and Him we shall serve in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness.

REMEMBER: —

1. *Christ, our Savior, ascended into heaven as the triumphant Victor over all His and our enemies. He entered into heaven, into the glory of His Father, there to prepare a place for us.*

2. *His ascension assures us that the gates of heaven are open to all who believe in Him, that we shall be where He is to see His glory.*

3. *Our Lord sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, that is, He, the God-man, lives to eternity, lives, and is with us in His Word, and reigns over His own with His almighty power forever and ever.*

MEMORIZE: —

In My Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you. John 14, 2.

I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14, 3.

Where I am, there shall also My servant be. John 12, 26.

I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you. John 14, 18.

QUESTIONS.

1. How long did our Lord remain on earth after His resurrection? 2. What did He do during these forty days? 3. Where were His disciples assembled on the fortieth day? 4. What promise did the Lord give them? 5. Why were they to be endued with the power of the Holy Ghost? 6. Where did Christ lead the apostles? 7. In what manner was the Lord taken up into heaven? 8. Who were the witnesses of His ascension? 9. What has Christ prepared for us in His Father's house? 10. What does our Savior say John 12, 26? 11. Since our Lord is in heaven, who also shall be there? 12. What does the sitting of Christ at the right hand of the Father not mean? 13. With what words does our Catechism explain it? 14. How is our Lord with us after His ascension? 15. What does it mean that our Lord reigns over us? 16. Of what does His resurrection, His ascension, and His sitting at the right hand of God make us certain?

LESSON 28.

The Second Article.

CHRIST WILL COME TO JUDGE THE WORLD.

Which is the Second Article?

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

1. When our Lord ascended into heaven and His disciples were looking after Him as He was taken up before their eyes, higher and higher, two men stood by them in white apparel, two angels, who said: *"This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."* Acts 1, 11. We confess therefore that our Lord *will come again,* that He will come again in like manner as His apostles saw Him taken up into heaven. He will come *visibly.* All men on earth will see our Lord coming in a cloud *with power and great glory.* Luke 21, 27. He will not come again in deep humility and poverty, as He came when He was born in Bethlehem, but with great power and glory. *"The Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels."* Matt. 16, 27. All men will see Him as the almighty King surrounded by His heavenly hosts. Every one will then have to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, and every one will have to bow to Him. *Our Lord will come again visibly and in great glory.*

2. When the Lord comes in His glory, the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the earth and all the works therein shall be burned up. 2 Pet. 3, 10. *The Last Day, the end of this world, will then have come.* On this Last Day our Lord will come to *"judge the quick and the dead."* Christ has been ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." Acts 10, 42. He will judge the *quick,* that is, those who are still living when He comes. He will judge the dead. On that day all the dead will rise again and will be brought before the Lord to be judged by Him.

3. Christ Himself has given us a beautiful description of His Judgment. (Read the whole passage, Matt. 25, 31—46.) He tells us: *"When the Son of Man shall come in*

His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations." Matt. 25, 31. 32. Christ is the Judge of all nations, of all men. "*We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in His body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*" 2 Cor. 5, 10. No one, be He ever so mighty, rich, or learned, can escape His Judgment.

4. How will Christ judge? He says: "*And He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.*" Matt. 25, 32. 33. The *sheep are those who truly believe in Christ, their Savior,* and in Him have forgiveness of their sins. *The goats are those who in this life rejected Christ and His grace.* To His sheep He will say: "*Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*" V. 34. On the goats He will pronounce this judgment: "*Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.*" V. 41. And then the Lord will prove to all men that His judgment is a righteous one by the good works of the believers and the evil deeds of His enemies. — This judgment is *final* and will never be altered. His enemies "*shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.*" Matt. 25, 46.

5. *When will this great Day of Judgment, the day of our Lord, come?* This we do not know. Our Lord says: "*Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.*" Mark 13, 32. We should not try to find out the exact day of the coming of our Lord. But God has in His Word revealed two important things about this day. He tells us that His day will come *suddenly, when nobody expects it.* "*The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.*" 2 Pet. 3, 10. "*Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh.*" Matt. 25, 13. — We also know that this day will come *soon.* "*The end of all things is at hand.*" 1 Pet. 4, 7. We may and should expect the Lord *daily* and be prepared to receive Him.

There are many signs which announce the coming of Christ. Matt. 24, 14—31; Luke 21, 25—36.

6. *"This is most certainly true."* With these words we conclude also our Second Article. From God's Word we know that all we have learned in the Second Article is most certainly true. Therefore we believe and confess it.

REMEMBER: —

1. *On the Last Day our Lord will come again visibly and in great glory to judge the quick and the dead, all men. You, too, must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.*

2. *On this day He will cast away the wicked and unbelievers into everlasting punishment. The righteous He will receive into His everlasting kingdom. Believe in Christ, and you will be saved.*

3. *We know neither day nor hour of His coming, but we know that His day will come unexpectedly and soon. Watch always and be prepared to receive your Lord.*

MEMORIZE: —

He is ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. Acts 10, 42.

The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. 2 Pet. 3, 10.

The end of all things is at hand. 1 Pet. 4, 7.

We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. 2 Cor. 5, 10.

QUESTIONS.

1. How did the apostles learn of the coming of their Lord at His ascension? 2. How will the Lord come again, according to the words of the angels? 3. Who will see our Lord in His second coming? 4. What is the difference between His first and His second coming? 5. On what day will the Lord come again? 6. What is the purpose of His coming? 7. Who are the quick? 8. How can the Lord judge the dead? 9. Whom, therefore, will Christ judge? 10. How will Christ judge? 11. Who are His sheep? 12. Who are the goats? 13. What will Christ say to His sheep on that day? 14. What judgment will He pronounce on His enemies? 15. When will the last day, the Day of Judgment, come? 16. What has God revealed to us concerning this day? 17. When, therefore, should we expect our Lord and prepare for His coming?

LESSON 29.

The Second Article.

REVIEW LESSON.

1. We confess in the Second Article that Christ, the God-man, is our Lord. In order to become our Lord, He had to redeem and purchase us from the cruel masters to whom we belonged, from all our sins, from death, and from the power of the devil. To purchase us He had to pay a price, a very high price — His holy, precious blood, His life. To purchase us He of His own free will gave up His life; He died on the cross. Christ was dead and buried. Do we now believe in a dead and buried Lord and Savior? What happened after His death, when He was still in His grave? Where did He go after having been quickened by the Spirit? What was His purpose in entering the habitation of Satan and his evil spirits? Christ showed Himself to be the Victor over Satan and hell. For whose benefit did He win this victory? From whose power are we free?

2. What happened on the third day after the death of our Lord? Christ rose from the dead. What does that mean? Christ came forth from His sepulcher. Who brought this glad message to the women? How did the Lord convince His disciples that He was living? Even who could not deny His resurrection? What makes us sure that Christ rose from the dead? What do we therefore gladly confess? (Job 19, 25.) — With what body did Christ come forth from His grave? How can we prove that it was the same body that was laid in the grave? But how was Christ's body after His resurrection? His body, indeed, was glorified. What does this mean? — The resurrection of our Lord is of great importance for us. It is full of comfort and consolation. If Christ would still be dead and lying in the grave, how could He be our Savior and King, and how would it be possible for Him to help us? Our faith in Him would be vain; indeed, we would be of all men most miserable. What does the Apostle Paul say about this? (1 Cor. 15, 17—19.) But Christ is risen indeed. What great comfort for us! Whom

has He conquered? Who alone is able to conquer this powerful enemy? What, therefore, must our Lord be? Christ rose after He had given His life a ransom for our sins. What, therefore, does the resurrection of our Lord prove concerning our sins? Christ is risen and lives forever. What comfort does this give us for our whole life? What comfort does it give us in the hour of death?

3. How long did our Lord remain with His disciples after His resurrection? Why did He repeatedly show Himself to them? What happened on the fortieth day? Where did His ascension take place? What promise did the Lord give His apostles just before His ascension? Why were they to be endued with the power of the Holy Ghost? In what manner did the ascension of our Lord take place? — Christ ascended into heaven as the triumphant Victor over all His enemies. His enemies are our enemies. What does His ascension prove concerning our enemies? For whose sake, therefore, did Christ ascend into heaven? — Christ ascended into heaven. Heaven is His Father's house. Why did our Lord go to His Father's house for us? He has prepared a place for us in heaven. He has opened the gates of heaven for us. What does our Lord say John 12, 26? Where will our Savior lead us, His disciples, too? Christ, our Treasure, is in heaven; what, therefore, shall be there also?

4. Christ ascended into heaven, and He now sits at the right hand of God in the glory of His Father. How does our Catechism explain this? Though Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, He is always with us, His disciples. In what manner is He with us? What must we use, read, hear, and think about in order that our Lord may be with us? What promise did He give us, John 14, 18? The Lord sitting at the right hand of God reigns over us; what does this mean? Of what does Christ's resurrection, ascension, and the sitting at the right hand of God make us certain?

5. When our Lord ascended into heaven, two angels stood by the disciples. They told them that Christ would come again in like manner as they had seen Him taken up into His glory. What do we learn from these words about the

coming of our Lord? Who will see Him when He returns? What is the difference between the first and the second coming of Christ? Our Lord will come again with power and glory. What will all men have to confess on that day, even His enemies? Who will escort the Lord when He returns in His glory? — What is the purpose of His coming? Whom will the Lord judge? What judgment will He pronounce on His sheep? How do we become His sheep? Who, therefore, will stand before the Son of Man on Judgment Day? What terrible sentence will His enemies hear? Our Lord tells us that after the Judgment His enemies will go away into everlasting punishment, but His sheep into everlasting life. How, therefore, is this Judgment? — Who alone knows the day and hour of the second coming of Christ? What should we therefore never try to do? What, however, does Scripture tell us concerning the Last Day? When, therefore, should we expect His coming and prepare for it? What does our Lord Himself say to us, Matt. 25, 13? Believe in Jesus Christ, and you will be saved.

And we believe in Jesus Christ,
Son of God and Mary's Son,
Who from heaven above came down
And leads us to heaven's throne;
By whose blood and death are we
Rescued from all misery.

LESSON 30.

The Third Article: Of Sanctification.

THE HOLY GHOST. THE TRIUNE GOD.

Which is the beginning of the Third Article?

I believe in the Holy Ghost.

1. According to the Second Article we believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord, that is, we do not only know that it is true what God's Word says about Christ and His work for

us, but *we put all our confidence, all our trust, in Him as our Savior* who has redeemed us. That is the true, saving faith. This saving faith is not our own work. *It is the work of God the Holy Ghost.* Without Him and the work which He performs in us no man would come to Jesus and believe in Him. The Holy Ghost alone can and does bring to Christ those that believe in Him. About the Holy Ghost and the work which He performs in us we learn in the *Third Article of our Christian Creed.*

2. *"I believe in the Holy Ghost,"* these are the first words of the Third Article. We *believe* in the Holy Ghost, thus we confess. To believe in some one means, as we have learned, *to put one's whole confidence and trust in him.* Now, God tells us in the First Commandment that we should fear and love Him above all things *and trust in Him alone. In God only* we should believe. And therefore we believe in the Holy Ghost, because He is the true God. *In saying that we believe in the Holy Ghost, we confess that He is the one true God, that He is our God, God as truly as the Father and Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.* The apostle says: *"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"* 1 Cor. 3, 16. Because the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, dwells in us, we are *God's* temple. The Holy Ghost therefore is the true God. — Remember what you learned in the history of creation. There we read: *"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."* Gen. 1, 2. The work of creation is ascribed to the Spirit of God, to the Holy Ghost. Creation is the work of God. *Therefore the Holy Ghost must be God.*

3. *We believe in the Father, and we believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, and we believe in the Holy Ghost.* There are *three distinct persons* in whom we believe. There are three persons whom we confess to be our God — God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. And we confess this according to Scripture. Christ, our Lord, commands us to baptize in the name of God the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. Matt. 28, 19. Let me remind you

of the *baptism of our Lord.* There the three divine Persons revealed themselves. *God the Son,* our Lord Jesus Christ, stood in the river Jordan, being baptized by John. *God the Father* revealed Himself in a voice from heaven, saying: *"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."* And the heavens opened, and the *Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost,* like a dove, descended upon our Lord. *There are three distinct divine Persons in God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.*

4. We confess that the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. *There are not three gods, however, but only one God. "Hear, O Israel: the Lord, our God, is one Lord."* Deut. 6, 4. The one and only true God has revealed Himself in three distinct divine Persons. *Our God, the one true God, besides whom there is no other God in heaven and earth, is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, three divine Persons, but one God.* Because God has revealed Himself in three divine Persons, we say: *God is the Triune God, the Holy Trinity.* — How it is possible that there are three distinct divine Persons, but only one God, we do not *understand;* but in accordance with the Word of God we *believe* in the Triune God, in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who has created us, redeemed us, and sanctifies us, or makes us holy. In Him we believe, Him we praise and adore as our God.

5. The Holy Ghost is the true God, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity. The Third Person is called the *Holy* Ghost because *He Himself is perfectly holy,* even as the Father and the Son. He is without sin. *"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory."* Is. 6, 3. Three times God is called holy, because there are three divine Persons in God. — But the Holy Ghost is called holy also *because He makes us sinners holy.* That is His work, making us holy, who by nature are unholy and sinful. He makes us holy by bringing us to Christ, our Savior, by kindling faith in Him in our hearts. This work of the Holy Ghost we call *sanctification.*

REMEMBER: —

1. *The Holy Ghost is true God together with the Father and the Son. Therefore we confess that we believe in Him.*

2. *The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. According to Scripture we confess three distinct divine Persons in God.*

3. *There are not three gods, however, but only one true and eternal God, who has revealed Himself in three Persons.*

4. *The one true God, our God, is the Triune God, the Holy Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.*

MEMORIZE: —

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 1 Cor. 3, 16.

Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Matt. 28, 19.

Hear, O Israel: the Lord, our God, is one Lord. Deut. 6, 4.

Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory. Is. 6, 3.

QUESTIONS.

1. Of whom does the Third Article treat? 2. In whom do we believe? 3. What does it mean to believe in some one? 4. In whom alone should we believe? 5. What do we therefore confess when we say that we believe in the Holy Ghost? 6. How do we prove from 1 Cor. 3, 16 that the Holy Ghost is true God? 7. What divine work is ascribed in Scripture to the Holy Ghost? 8. What, therefore, must the Holy Ghost be? 9. How many divine persons do we confess in the Three Articles of our Christian Faith? 10. How are they called? 11. In whose name are we baptized? 12. How did the three divine persons reveal themselves at the baptism of our Lord? 13. How many gods are there? 14. In how many persons did the one true God reveal Himself? 15. Who, therefore, is the one true God? 16. How do we call God because He has revealed Himself in three distinct persons? 17. Which person of the Holy Trinity is the Holy Ghost? 18. Why is He called holy? 19. What is His work? 20. By what other name is this work of the Holy Spirit known?

LESSON 31.

The Third Article.

WITHOUT THE HOLY GHOST I CANNOT BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST OR COME TO HIM.

Which is the Third Article?

I believe in the Holy Ghost.

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him.

1. We confess that we cannot by our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ or come to Him. Whoever would be saved must believe in Jesus Christ and so come to Him. *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."* Acts 16, 31. Christ, our Lord, it is true, has done everything that was necessary for our salvation. He redeemed us, He paid the penalty for all our sins, by His sufferings and death He gained for us the grace of God and the forgiveness of sins. He has done everything that we might be His own and live under Him as our Lord. All things are made ready for our salvation.

2. *The only thing that we need do now is to come to Christ and accept from Him all He has gained for us.* Take an example. You are in great want and distress. A rich and charitably inclined man offers you a sum of money sufficient to help you out of your trouble. The money is yours, for the rich man has given it to you. If you take it, your want will be at an end. But suppose you do not take it. Perhaps you do not believe that the rich man really means what he says, or you do not want to accept it from him, or, if you have taken it, you are not making use of it. The help has then been offered to you in vain. Your sad condition remains as it was. So it is with what Christ, our Savior, has merited for us. He has gained full salvation for us, and He offers it to us in His Word. If we do not accept it, His work is in vain as far as we are concerned; we remain in our sins.

3. How do we accept what Christ has gained for us? *By*

believing in Him as our Savior. He believes in Christ who from his whole heart confesses: I know from the Word of God that Christ is *my* Lord, that He has redeemed *me* from all *my* sins, from death, and from the power of the devil. I know from the Word of God that *I* am Christ's own, His child, that He is really *my* Lord. For His sake all *my* sins are forgiven. Through His suffering and death *I* am free from death and damnation and have everlasting life. *What Christ has done He has done for me, a lost and condemned sinner.* In Him is my only hope. By faith we come to Christ. Faith is, as it were, the *hand* with which we take everything that Christ has gained for us.

4. Believe in Jesus Christ and you will be saved, that is the only way to heaven and everlasting life. But we confess *that we cannot by our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, or come to Him.* Alas! also this is most certainly true. We are lost and condemned sinners. The Scriptures tell us that all men are by nature *blind* in these things. We do not understand the glorious message that in Christ alone is our salvation. We always try to save ourselves by our good works. If we are told about this salvation, we think it *foolishness.* "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto Him." 1 Cor. 2, 14. — We have not the *strength* to come to Jesus, our Savior. We are *dead* in the sight of God. *"Ye were dead in trespasses and sins."* Eph. 2, 1. A dead person cannot do anything to bring himself to life again. Lazarus could not raise himself from the grave. So we cannot do anything to raise ourselves from our death in sins. *"No man can say that Jesus is the Lord* [that is, believe in Him] *but by the Holy Ghost."* 1 Cor. 12, 3. And even if we could, we would not come to Jesus and believe in Him. We are by nature God's enemies. We do not want to be saved by Him. We cannot by our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, or come to Him. *As far as we are concerned, we are lost.*

5. But God has had pity on us. He sent His Holy Ghost. The *Holy Ghost* does what we cannot do. He brings us to

Christ, He works in us true faith. True faith is God's work in us, the work of the Holy Ghost, *His work alone.* Not our works, but His *grace alone* moves Him to do this work. *"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast."* Eph. 2, 8. 9.

REMEMBER: —

1. *Christ has done everything for my salvation. All now depends upon my coming to Jesus, my Lord and Savior.*

2. *I come to Jesus by believing in Him. True faith in Christ is not my own work. I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, or come to Him.*

3. *Saving faith in Christ is the work of the Holy Ghost alone. Not my works or my merits, but only His grace has moved Him to bring me to Christ and save me.*

MEMORIZE: —

The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto Him. 1 Cor. 2, 14.

Ye were dead in trespasses and sins. Eph. 2, 1.

No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. 12, 3.

By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.

QUESTIONS.

1. What has Christ done for our salvation? 2. In what manner did He gain for us the grace of God, forgiveness of sins, and life everlasting? 3. What is now the one thing necessary for our salvation? 4. What happens if we do not accept all that Christ offers us for our salvation? 5. How do we come to Christ and accept in true faith what He has gained for us? 6. What does it mean to believe in Christ? 7. In what respect may we compare our faith with a hand? 8. Which is the only way to heaven? 9. What do we confess in the Third Article about our coming to Christ and believing in Him? 10. Why are we not able to come to Christ by our own reason? 11. How do we always try to save ourselves? 12. Why do we not have strength to come to Jesus and believe in Him? 13. What does the apostle say 1 Cor. 12, 3? 14. Who alone can bring us to Christ and work faith in us? 15. What moves the Holy Ghost to perform this work in us?

LESSON 32.

The Third Article.

THE HOLY GHOST HAS CALLED ME.

Which is the Third Article?

I believe in the Holy Ghost.

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him, but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel.

1. We cannot by our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord, or come to Him. The Holy Ghost alone is able to bring us to Christ, our Savior. How does He bring us to Christ? We confess as children of God that *the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel.* By calling me through the Gospel, the Holy Ghost has brought me to Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior. Let us see what this means.

2. Our Lord, in a parable, once spoke of a certain rich man who made a great supper for his guests. And he sent out his servants at supper-time to say to those who were bidden: *"Come, for all things are now ready."* Luke 14, 16. 17. The meal was prepared, and the rich man invited his guests to come and partake of it. At dinner-time, when your mother has prepared dinner for the family, she calls to you, "Dinner is ready. Now come and eat! It is prepared for you too." In a similar manner the *Holy Ghost calls us and invites us to come to Christ and accept His salvation.* Christ, our Savior, has prepared all things; He has prepared forgiveness of all our sins, life, and salvation. All things necessary for our salvation are ready in Christ. All is finished. And now the Holy Ghost brings us these glad tidings: All things are now ready, all things needed for your salvation. Come, whosoever you are, come to your Savior! Come and take and enjoy what He in His great love has prepared for you. *We come to Jesus only by faith.*

The Holy Ghost calls us and invites us, Come, *believe* in your Savior, and you will be saved.

3. You do not see the Holy Ghost when He calls you. *The Holy Ghost calls you by the Gospel.* The Gospel, as you have learned (Lesson 14), *is the glad tidings of the grace of God for all men,* the tidings of what Christ has done for us to save us. As the rich man in the parable, so the Holy Ghost sends His *servants.* These servants are all those who tell you the Gospel of Christ, your minister, your teacher, your parents, etc. When you hear the Gospel or read it, the *Holy Ghost* comes to you and calls you. In the Gospel He says to you: All things have been prepared by Christ; they are ready for you, for your salvation. In Christ you have forgiveness of your sins and salvation. *Come now, you lost and condemned sinner, and take what your Lord freely offers you. Believe in Christ, and you will be saved.* That is the call of the Holy Ghost by the Gospel. *"He called you by our Gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."* 2 Thess. 2, 14.

4. When your mother calls you to dinner, you must come by your own will and strength, and you have the strength to do so. We sinners have neither the will nor the strength to come to Jesus. The Holy Ghost knows that we cannot by our own strength come to our Savior. *By calling us He gives us the strength to hear and to follow His call.* By His call He brings us to Christ and works in us faith in our Lord, so that we willingly come to Him. The call of the Holy Ghost is God's call, full of power. This work of the Holy Ghost we also call *conversion.* The Holy Ghost alone converts us, that is, He turns us from our sins to Christ. "Turn Thou me, and I shall be turned; for Thou art the Lord, my God." Jer. 31, 18.

5. Remember that the Holy Ghost brings you to Christ *by the Gospel.* Only through the Gospel does He work in the hearts of men. The Gospel is the means by which we obtain the grace of God and salvation. *If we do not read or hear the Word of God, the Gospel, the Holy Ghost cannot perform His work in us.* Therefore you should *diligently*

read and hear the Word of God, the Gospel. *"It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."* Rom. 1, 16.

REMEMBER: —

1. *Christ has prepared your whole salvation. All is ready, ready for you. The Holy Ghost calls and invites you to come and partake freely of what Jesus has gained for you.*

2. *By His call the Holy Ghost gives you strength to follow His call, to come to your Lord. He Himself works by His call in your heart the true faith in your Savior and so brings you to Christ. This work of the Holy Ghost is also called conversion. Conversion is the work of the Holy Ghost alone. Our salvation is a free gift of God.*

3. *The Holy Ghost calls us by the Gospel of Christ. Diligently read and hear God's saving Word.*

MEMORIZE: —

Come, for all things are now ready. Luke 14, 17.

Turn Thou me, and I shall be turned; for Thou art the Lord, my God. Jer. 31, 18.

By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. Eph. 2, 8. 9.

I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Rom. 1, 16.

QUESTIONS.

1. What do we confess in the Third Article concerning ourselves? 2. Whose work is it that we come to Christ? 3. Who has prepared all things necessary for our salvation? 4. Who calls us to come and partake of all that Christ has gained? 5. What do we mean when we say that the Holy Ghost calls us? 6. By what means does the Holy Ghost call us to Jesus? 7. What is the Gospel? 8. Who are the servants the Holy Ghost sends to us with the Gospel-message? 9. What does the Holy Ghost do when you hear or read the Gospel? 10. What are we not able to do of ourselves when the Holy Ghost calls us? 11. What does the Holy Ghost give us when He calls us? 12. What does He work in us by His call? 13. What other name have we for this work of the Holy Ghost? 14. Whose work alone is our conversion? 15. To whom does the Holy Ghost turn us when He converts us? 16. The Holy Ghost converts us by the Gospel; what should we therefore diligently do?

LESSON 33.

The Third Article.

THE HOLY GHOST HAS ENLIGHTENED, SANCTIFIED, AND KEPT ME IN THE TRUE FAITH.

Which is the Third Article?

I believe in the Holy Ghost.

What does this mean?

I believe that the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.

1. The Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, and in doing so *He has also enlightened me with His gifts.* By calling me, He has kindled true faith in Christ in me, so that I know Christ and acknowledge Him to be my Savior, I believe and trust, rejoice and find comfort in Him alone for life and death. These are gifts of the Holy Ghost with which He enlightens every child of God: *true knowledge of Christ as his Redeemer, true faith in Him, peace with God, his Father, joy and comfort in all distress.* What wonderful gifts! How rich does the Holy Ghost make a child of God! *Do not forget to thank Him daily for the precious gifts He bestows upon you.*

2. *"The Holy Ghost has sanctified me,"* that is, *He has made me holy, and He does this every day, more and more.* He sanctifies me *"in the true faith."* By His call the Holy Ghost has called forth in us true faith in our Lord. Through faith you have forgiveness of sins and are a child of God, with whom God, for Christ's sake, is well pleased. *But it is God's will that His children lead a holy life,* flee and shun all sin, and live according to His commandments. *"This is the will of God, even your sanctification."* 1 Thess. 4, 3. Of ourselves we cannot do this, but the Holy Ghost comes to our aid. *He sanctifies us, He makes us holy.* Through faith He comes into our heart and dwells in us. *"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"* 1 Cor. 3, 16. And the Holy Ghost *works* in us, the

children of God. In His strength we begin *to hate the sins* that we formerly loved, and to flee them. In His strength we begin *to fear and love God above all things, and to trust in Him.* We no longer serve the devil and our sins, but begin to serve our Lord who has redeemed us, and our Father in heaven.

3. True, we are not *perfectly holy,* nor do we become so as long as we live here on earth. True children of God also must confess *that they daily sin much and deserve nothing but punishment.* But they are heartily sorry for this. They daily ask God's forgiveness for Christ's sake. And the Holy Ghost *daily* gives them *new strength and power* to fight and struggle against all temptations of the devil and the world and their own evil lusts. He daily gives them new strength to walk in godliness, to love God and their neighbor. Let us abide in Him, and we shall more and more overcome the devil, the world, and our sins, become more and more holy as our Lord and God is holy. *"He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing."* John 15, 5.

4. *"The Holy Ghost has kept me in the true faith,"* so a child of God confesses. The Holy Ghost has already called and enlightened us and begun to sanctify us *in Holy Baptism.* There already He has brought us to Christ and has bestowed His precious gifts upon us. And *to-day* we still have the true faith; we believe in our Savior, and in Him we are children of God. *That is not our own merit, it is the work of the Holy Ghost in us.* He has worked in us by the Gospel, through our parents, through the Christian school and the church, and by the Gospel He has kept us in the true faith. *"Ye are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."* 1 Pet. 1, 5. — And He has promised in His Word *that He will keep us in this faith until our end. "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."* Phil. 1, 6.

5. This is the work of the Holy Ghost in all true believers, and *He is willing to perform this work in every one who hears the Gospel.* God earnestly desires to save all men.

"God will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. 2, 4. Christ died for all men; He redeemed all lost and condemned sinners. The Gospel is a power of God unto salvation to all who read and hear it. — *And yet not all men are saved; most men are lost.* What is the cause of this? They are lost *by their own fault.* Most men will not be saved. They obstinately resist the Holy Ghost and the saving Gospel, and so they do not come to Christ, but are condemned. *"O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in Me is thine help."* Hos. 13, 9.

REMEMBER: —

1. *The Holy Ghost has enlightened me and bestowed on me His precious gifts, the right knowledge of Christ, true faith in Him.*

2. *He sanctifies me and makes me holy. He daily gives me strength to struggle against Satan, world, and sin, to overcome them and to lead a godly life, to love God and my neighbor.*

3. *He has, by the Gospel, kept me in the true faith until this day, and He has promised me that He will do so until the end.*

4. *This work the Holy Ghost desires to perform in all that hear the Gospel. Whosoever is lost is lost by his own fault.*

MEMORIZE: —

This is the will of God, even your sanctification. 1 Thess. 4, 3.

Ye are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. 1 Pet. 1, 5.

He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Phil. 1, 6.

God will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. 1 Tim. 2, 4.

QUESTIONS.

1. Which is the second work of the Holy Ghost mentioned in our Catechism? 2. With what does the Holy Ghost enlighten us? 3. What are His gifts? 4. What has the Holy Ghost by His call

kindled in us? 5. Whose children are we through faith? 6. What is God's will regarding His children? (1 Cor. 3, 16.) 7. What does the word "sanctify" mean? 8. Who performs this work in us? 9. What do we, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, begin to hate? 10. Whom do we begin to love? 11. What must even true believers confess? 12. What do we therefore daily ask of God? 13. And what does the Holy Ghost daily grant us? 14. Which is the last work which the Holy Ghost performs in us? 15. Since when has He kept us in the true faith? 16. How long has He promised to keep us in the faith? 17. In whom will the Holy Ghost perform this work He has begun in us? 18. What is the gracious will of God toward all men? 19. What is the reason that not all men are saved? 20. Whose fault is it that they are lost? 21. By whose work alone are we saved?

LESSON 34.

The Third Article.

REVIEW LESSON.

1. In the Third Article of our Creed we learn about the Holy Ghost, about His person and His work. We confess that we believe in the Holy Ghost. In whom alone should we believe? What do we therefore confess of the Holy Ghost when we say that we believe in Him? How can we prove from Holy Scripture that the Holy Ghost is true God? 1 Cor. 3, 16. Which divine work is ascribed to the Holy Ghost?

2. In whom do we believe according to the First Article? In whom according to the Second Article? And in whom according to the Third Article? In how many Persons of the Godhead do we believe, according to our Creed? There are three distinct Persons in whom we believe. We believe in them; what, therefore, are they? All these three Persons are the true God. In whose name have we been baptized? On what occasion did these three divine Persons reveal themselves to us? How did they reveal themselves at the baptism of Christ? The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; how many Gods are there? In how many Persons did the one true God reveal Himself? Who, therefore, is the one true God? What do we call God because

He is one and has revealed Himself in three Persons?—Why is the third Person of God called the Holy Ghost? The Holy Ghost makes us holy; what do we call this work of the Holy Spirit?

3. What has Christ done for our salvation? What has He gained for us in order to save us? What is now the one thing necessary for our salvation? What becomes of us if we do not come to Jesus and accept what He has merited for us? How do we come to Jesus and accept all that He offers us?—Believe in Jesus Christ, your Savior; that is the only way to heaven. But what must we confess concerning our believing and coming to Christ? Why can we not by our own reason and strength believe in Christ, or come to Him? What do we read Eph. 2, 1? We are dead in trespasses and sins. A dead person cannot do anything to raise himself from death to a new life. As far as we are concerned, we are lost and condemned creatures. Who took pity on us? Whom did God send to raise us from the death of our sins? To whom does the Holy Ghost bring us? Do we and can we help Him to perform this work in us? Whose work alone is it? By what is the Holy Ghost moved to bring us to Christ, our Lord, and thus to save us?

4. The Holy Ghost alone can bring us to Christ. Our Catechism tells us how the Spirit of God performs this work in us. What do we confess in the Third Article about this work of the Holy Ghost? The Holy Ghost has called me. In which parable does Christ Himself explain what this means? As this rich man had prepared a supper for His guests, so Christ has prepared, as it were, a supper for us, for all men. What is this supper which Christ has prepared for all men? In what manner did He prepare everything for our salvation? Who now calls us to the salvation Christ has prepared? What does the Holy Ghost say to us in this call? We come to our Lord and to the meal He has prepared for us by believing in Him. The Holy Ghost calls and invites us to believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord, and be saved.—By what means does the Holy Ghost call and invite us to Christ, to faith in Him? Who, generally, are the

servants He sends out to call us to Christ by the Gospel? But who is it that really calls us when we hear the Gospel?— The Holy Ghost calls us by the Gospel. He says to us, Come to your Lord and be saved. What are we not able to do by our own strength when the Holy Ghost calls us? What does the Holy Ghost give us in calling us? What does He call forth in us by His call? What do we call this work of the Spirit? Who alone performs conversion in us? The Holy Ghost brings us to Christ, or converts us, only through the Gospel. When can the Holy Ghost not perform this work in us? What should we therefore diligently do?

5. What is the second work of the Holy Ghost? With what does the Holy Ghost enlighten us? What are His gifts? — The Holy Ghost sanctifies me; what does that mean? The Holy Ghost sanctifies us in the true faith. Whose children are we through faith? What is God's will toward His children? 1 Thess. 4, 3. Who performs this work in us? The Holy Ghost dwells in our heart, and renews and sanctifies it. What do we hate now by the power He has granted us? Whom do we begin to love? — Our sanctification in this life is never perfect. What must also the children of God confess? What do they therefore ask of their Lord every day? But what does the Holy Ghost daily give them? Against whom do the children of God daily struggle and fight? In whose strength do they more and more overcome the devil, the world, and their own sins?— Which is the last work performed in us by the Holy Ghost? Since when has the Holy Ghost kept us in the true faith? How long has He promised to keep us with Christ? — In whom is the Holy Ghost willing to perform His work to the end in order to save them? What is God's gracious will towards all men? What additional proof can you give for the fact that God desires all men to be saved? How is it that not all men are saved? Whose fault is it that those are lost who are condemned? By whose grace and work alone are we saved?

LESSON 35.

The Third Article.

THE HOLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Which is the Third Article?

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints.

What does this mean?

I believe that . . . the Holy Ghost has called me, . . . even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

1. God the Holy Ghost has called me to Christ, sanctified me, and kept me in the true faith. The Holy Ghost, however, has performed this work of His grace *not only on me.* Besides me He has called, and still calls, many poor lost sinners to Christ, enlightens them with His precious gifts, with faith in their Savior. All these the Holy Ghost also *"gathers,"* as our Catechism states. The Holy Ghost does not suffer those who have been converted by the Gospel to *be separate,* but adds them to His disciples, as on that first Pentecost all those were added to the congregation of the disciples who had been converted by Peter's sermon. Acts 2, 41. All true believers are Christ's own; through faith in Him they are closely united as brethren and sisters in the one Lord. *All true believers, taken together, are the holy Christian Church on earth, which the Holy Ghost sanctifies and keeps in the one true faith.*

2. The Third Article calls the Christian Church *the communion of saints.* It is a communion, a congregation, of *saints,* that is, of *holy people.* They are not holy in themselves, but the *Holy Ghost has sanctified them,* or made them holy, through faith in Christ. In Christ they have *forgiveness of all their sins* and are holy in the eyes of God. *Only true believers in Christ therefore belong to the Christian Church; only they, but all of them.* Instead of the communion of saints we might also say *the communion of true believers.* — The Church is the communion of saints. All

believers in Christ are a *communion, a congregation;* they form, as it were, one *body.* They do not all live together at one place, in one city, or in the same country, — we find them scattered over all the earth, — but they are *closely bound together by one and the same faith in Christ.* They belong to one family, of which Christ is the Head and Master, and all are members. *The Church is the communion of saints; for believers only, but all believers, are members of it.*

3. We *believe* that the holy Christian Church is here on earth, but we do not *see* it; it is invisible. Only true believers belong to the Church, and no man can look into another's heart and see his *faith.* Only One really knows who the members of the Church are. *"The Lord knoweth them that are His."* 2 Tim. 2, 19. We cannot see the Church, but *we believe that it is here on earth;* for Holy Scripture assures us that the Holy Ghost by the Gospel at all times calls men to Christ and keeps them in the true faith to the end of the world. Our Lord says: *"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* Matt. 16, 18. — The Church is *holy* because all its members are *holy by faith in Christ* and in the strength of the Holy Ghost *lead a godly life* and serve their Lord in His kingdom in righteousness. — It is called the *Christian* Church because it is built on *Christ. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."* 1 Cor. 3, 11. And He is not only its Foundation, but also *the Head and King of the Church.*

4. We do not see the Church, *but we know where it is, where we can find it.* The Holy Ghost calls and keeps the Church only *by the Gospel.* God has promised us that, where His Gospel is preached, it shall not remain *without fruit;* some of those who hear it will come to Christ and believe in Him. *Wherever the Word of God is preached, and only where it is in use, the holy Christian Church is to be found.*

5. Scripture also speaks of a *visible* Church, of visible congregations of Christians. A visible Church is the number of all those who call themselves Christians, who *profess*

their faith in Christ and are gathered about God's Word. In these visible congregations there are not only true believers, but also *hypocrites,* who indeed confess the Christian faith, but do not believe in their Savior. Among the visible churches there are *many false churches and one true visible Church.* The true visible Church teaches and confesses the Word of God *in all its purity, without false doctrines. This true visible Church is the Evangelical Lutheran Church.* To this Church we ought to belong, and to no other; for our Lord says: *"If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth; and the truth shall make you free."* John 8, 31. 32. *"Beware of false prophets!"* Matt. 7, 15.

REMEMBER: —

1. *Let it be your earnest concern to be and remain a member of the invisible Church of Christ; remain steadfast in the true faith. He that believes, and He only, shall be saved.*

2. *Let it also be your earnest concern to belong to the true visible Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church. In this Church the pure Word is preached, the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation. Avoid all false churches. "Beware of false prophets!"*

3. *Pray and work with all diligence for your Church that it may be maintained and extended.* Matt. 28, 19.

MEMORIZE: —

The Lord knoweth them that are His. 2 Tim. 2, 19.

Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Matt. 16, 18.

Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 3, 11.

If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth; and the truth shall make you free. John 8, 31. 32.

QUESTIONS.

1. Who are the members of the holy Christian Church? 2. By whom was the Church founded? 3. In what way does the Holy Ghost build up and preserve the Church? 4. What is the Church

also called in the Third Article? 5. Who are the saints? 6. Why are believers called saints? 7. How are they sanctified by the Holy Ghost? 8. What does the Word "communion" mean? 9. What binds true believers so closely together? 10. Why is the Church called the *holy* Church? 11. Why is it called the *Christian* Church? 12. Where do we find the true Church? 13 Why is this so? 14. What is the visible Church? 15. Who also, besides true believers, belongs to these visible churches? 16. Which is the true visible Church? 17. How is the true visible Church called? 18. Why should we belong to this Church and avoid all false churches?

LESSON 36.

The Third Article.

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

Which is the Third Article?

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins.

What does this mean?

In which Church He [the Holy Ghost] *daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers.*

1. We confess in our Catechism that the Holy Ghost forgives all sins to me and all believers. *We believe that there is a forgiveness of sins.* God's Word assures us of this. *"There is forgiveness with Thee."* Ps. 130, 4. *How sorely do we need forgiveness of sins!* You know that all men, also believers, commit sin. A child of God indeed earnestly strives against committing any sin, he tries not to transgress the commandments of his heavenly Father; but, alas! also God's children sin daily and much. *"There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not."* Eccl. 7, 20. With our sins we deserve nothing but God's punishment. *"The wages of sin is death."* Rom. 6, 23. *Without forgiveness of sins we are lost.*

2. *But there is a forgiveness of sins with God.* He assures us in His Word that by grace, for Christ's sake, He will forgive me all my sins. He will do so *daily and richly.* Whenever we have sinned, we should come to Him and pray to Him: Forgive me my trespasses. Even as a child who

has grieved his father by his disobedience penitently comes to him and asks his forgiveness, so we in true penitence should daily come to our heavenly Father, whom we have so sorely grieved, whose punishment we deserve, and ask His forgiveness. *He will not cast us out.* He will hear our prayer, and we will praise Him: *"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases."* Ps. 103, 2. 3. The *publican* came into the Temple and humbly said: *"God be merciful to me, a sinner!"* And God was merciful to him; he went down to his house *justified.* He had received forgiveness of his sins. Luke 18, 9—14.

3. God forgives us our sins. He is moved to do this *not by our good works or merits.* God does not see anything in us which could induce Him to forgive us our trespasses. We deserve nothing but punishment. *His free grace alone moves God to forgive us all our sins.* Our God is a merciful God. He takes pity on us, His sinful children. — By grace God *forgives* us our sins, that is, He does not look upon our sins, does not *impute* them to us, but declares us sinners *righteous.* In the beautiful parable of our Lord which we find Matt. 18, 23 ff., the wicked servant asks his lord to have patience with him, whom he owed so much. And the kind lord, moved with compassion, loosed the servant from his fetters and forgave him all his debts, which he never would have been able to pay. *Thus God, moved with compassion, does not punish us as we have deserved, and declares us free from debt, declares us righteous, or in other words, God justifies us.*

4. How can the just and holy God who has threatened to punish all who transgress His commandments forgive sins and declare sinners righteous? He does so *for Christ's sake. In Christ* we have the forgiveness of sins. *"In Christ we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."* Eph. 1, 7. Christ fulfilled the Law of God in our stead, He suffered the punishment for our sins, and so made good for us. *He has earned full forgiveness for us; for His sake all our sins are forgiven.*

5. Who *receives* forgiveness of sins? We confess that God forgives all sins *to me and all believers.* It is true, Christ has *procured* forgiveness *for all men* — Christ died for every sinner. God, in His grace, *offers* this forgiveness by the Gospel *to all who hear it.* We read: *"God was in Christ, reconciling the world* [all men] *unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the Word of Reconciliation."* 2 Cor. 5, 19. Yet not all receive forgiveness, but only those *who believe in Christ and thus accept the forgiveness* which Christ has earned for all men. Without faith in Christ there is no forgiveness of sins. *We are justified by faith alone.*

6. We receive forgiveness of sins, we are justified before God, *without the deeds of the Law, by grace alone, for Christ's sake, through faith in our Lord.* This is the *chief article of our Christian faith.* This doctrine is taught only by the Christian Church. *It gives all the glory for our salvation to God and affords true comfort to all sinners.*

REMEMBER: —

1. *God has promised in His Word to forgive us all our sins daily and richly. Come to Him every day and with true penitence, with a contrite heart, ask His forgiveness for Christ's sake. He will graciously grant it.*

2. *We are justified in the sight of God without the deeds of the Law, by His grace, for Christ's sake, through faith in Him. This is the chief doctrine of the Christian Church and the only one that gives lasting comfort to all sinners.*

MEMORIZE: —

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases. Ps. 103, 2. 3.

In Christ we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace. Eph. 1, 7.

God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and has committed unto us the Word of Reconciliation. 2 Cor. 5, 19.

QUESTIONS.

1. Why do we so sorely need daily forgiveness of sins? 2. What do we deserve with our sins before God? 3. Of what does God assure us in His Word with regard to our sins? 4. What should we therefore do every day? 5. How did the publican in the Temple ask for forgiveness? 6. How did God answer his prayer? Luke 18, 13. 14. 7. Why cannot our works and merits induce God to grant us forgiveness? 8. By what is God moved to forgive us our sins? 9. God forgives us our sins — what does that mean? 10. What do we also call this act of God by which He forgives us our sins? 11. For whose sake does God forgive, or justify, us? 12. Why do we have forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake? 13. Who only receives forgiveness of sins? 14. Why is faith in Christ necessary if we wish to receive forgiveness? 15. How are we justified before God? 16. Why is this doctrine the chief doctrine of our Church?

LESSON 37.

The Third Article.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY AND LIFE EVERLASTING.

Which is the Third Article?

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting.

What does this mean?

He [the Holy Ghost] *will at the Last Day raise up me and all the dead and give unto me and all believers in Christ eternal life. This is most certainly true.*

1. *We believe the resurrection of the body,* so we confess. We believe that *God will raise up me and all the dead,* so that our bodies which have died shall again be made alive and come forth from their graves. Our bodies *die* and are buried, and in the grave they decay. *These same bodies* will live again. It is true, we cannot *understand* how this is possible. To unbelievers it seems ridiculous, they laugh and mock at this doctrine. Still we *believe* it; we are assured by the Word of God that our dead shall live again. And *"the Word of the Lord is right."* Ps. 33, 4. Our Lord says: *"The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth."* John

5, 28. Our God is *almighty,* with Him nothing is impossible. Luke 1, 37.

2. God will raise *me and all the dead. All* that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth from their graves. Christ will not only raise His own, His believers, but all men, those, too, who did not believe in Him, but died in their sins. — *"The hour is coming,"* our Lord says: it is coming on *the Last Day* of the world. On that great day, when our Lord will come again to judge the quick and the dead, all the dead shall hear the almighty voice of the Son of God and, whether they will or not, shall come forth from their graves to meet their God and Lord at His judgment-seat.

3. All the dead will be raised from death and the grave; *but there will be a great difference in their resurrection.* Our Lord says: *"They that have done good* [shall come forth] *unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation."* John 5, 29. Those who here on earth believed in Christ, and by the power of His grace served Him in His kingdom, and died in the Lord trusting in Him, will come forth to life everlasting and go with their Lord to His eternal glory. *They that have done evil,* those who rejected their Savior and died in their sins, will rise unto *the resurrection of damnation.* They will be thrown into *hell,* into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Matt. 25, 41. May our heavenly Father keep us steadfast in the true faith and preserve us from hell and damnation!

4. *They that have done good,* those who believed in Christ and died in the Lord, shall come forth unto *the resurrection of life. At the Last Day the risen Lord will raise all that fell asleep in Him, and will give them life everlasting, life without end.* We confess that the Lord will "give *me* and all believers eternal life." The Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, by His grace I believe in my Savior, by grace He has kept me in the faith, and so *I am assured* that He will give *me* eternal life. *"Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life."* John 3, 16. To me

and all believers the Lord will give eternal life, but *to believers only. "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."* John 3, 36.

5. God will give us believers *eternal life.* Christ will lead His own, His believers, soul and body, into His heavenly kingdom, there to live and reign with Him in everlasting joy and glory. In heaven there will be *no sin;* in perfect holiness we shall serve our Lord. There will be no more *death,* nor *sorrow,* nor *crying,* nor *pain.* Rev. 21, 4. All these things shall have passed away. There will be pure and *true joy and happiness forever and ever.* We shall be *with God;* we shall see Him, our heavenly King and Father, and His wondrous ways. *"We shall see Him as He is."* 1 John 3, 2. We shall *see our dear Lord and Savior,* whom we love now even without having seen Him. We shall see Him *in His glory,* in the glory which His Father has given Him. What unspeakable joy to see God, our Lord and Savior, to be and live with Him! *"In Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore."* Ps. 16, 11. — Our *bodies* will share this joy. They will come forth *glorified, freed from all sin, sickness, and infirmity, fashioned* like unto the glorious body of our risen Lord.

REMEMBER: —

1. *It is most certainly true that the Holy Ghost by the Gospel has called me to Christ, my Lord, and enlightened me with His gifts, with true faith in my Savior.*

2. *It is most certainly true that in Christ I have forgiveness of all my sins, that I am justified before God without the deeds of the Law, by grace alone, for Christ's sake, through faith.*

3. *It is most certainly true that the Holy Ghost will keep me in the true faith, and at the day of my Lord raise my glorified body and give to me and all believers in Christ eternal life. I am assured of all of this by the Word of God. This is what I firmly believe and hope for in life and death.*

MEMORIZE: —

The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth: they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation. John 5, 28. 29.

We shall see Him as He is. 1 John 3, 2.

In Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore. Ps. 16, 11.

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. John 3, 36.

QUESTIONS.

1. "We believe the resurrection of the body" — what does this mean? 2. What happens to our bodies when we die? 3. Why do we believe that God will raise our bodies? 4. Why do we firmly believe that God can do this though to us it seems impossible? 5. Who will hear the voice of the Son of God when His hour has come? 6. When will His hour come? 7. What difference will there be in the resurrection of the dead? 8. Who are "they that have done good"? 9. Who are "they that have done evil"? 10. To what kind of resurrection will these come forth? 11. What will the Lord at the Last Day give unto me and all believers? 12. Why am I assured that He will give eternal life also to me? 13. What does our Lord say John 3, 36? 14. What will there no longer be in eternal life? 15. What will give us everlasting joy and happiness in eternal life? 16. How will the bodies of the believers rise at that day? 17. Like unto whose body will they be fashioned? 18. Why do we believe that all we have confessed in the Third Article is most certainly true?

LESSON 38.

The Third Article.

REVIEW LESSON.

1. God the Holy Ghost has called me to Christ, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. Besides me He has called and calls others. What does the Holy Ghost also do in regard to all that He has brought to Christ? What does it mean that He gathers them? What does Scripture call the whole number of all true believers? — What is the Christian

Church also called in the Third Article? Why are the believers called saints? What does the word *communion* signify? Who only, therefore, belongs to the one true Christian Church? — Why is this Church invisible? The true Church is invisible; still we know and are convinced that it is always here on earth. Why are we certain about this? What does our Lord say concerning His Church Matt. 16, 18? We call the Church the *holy* Church; why do we do this? Why is the Church called the *Christian* Church? Christ is the Foundation of the Church, what else? — We cannot see the Church, still we know where we can find it. Where is it to be found? Why can we be certain that the Church is where the Word of God, the Gospel, is preached and used? — There is one true Church of Christ, the congregation of all believers on earth. But Scripture also speaks of visible churches, visible congregations. What do we mean when we speak of visible churches? To these churches not only true believers belong, but who also? Of these visible churches, or denominations, there is quite a number. What difference exists among these churches? Which is the true visible Church? What is it called? To which Church should we belong?

2. In the Third Article we also confess the forgiveness of sins. Why do we so sorely need forgiveness of sins? What have we deserved with our sins? What will be our fate if we do not receive forgivenèss of sins? — Of what does God assure us in His Word concerning our sins? We daily sin much and deserve nothing but punishment; what should we therefore do every day? How did the publican in the Temple pray to God for forgiveness? How do you know that God answered his prayer? — God forgives the sins of all who come to Him in true penitence. What does not move God to forgive us our sins? Why cannot anything He sees in us induce Him to grant us forgiveness? What moves God to forgive us our sins? What do we mean when we say that God forgives sin? For whose sake does the just and holy God grant us forgiveness? In whom have we redemption, the forgiveness of sins? What has Christ done to earn this

forgiveness? — For whom has Christ procured forgiveness? How does God offer this forgiveness? What, however, is necessary if we wish to receive this precious gift of God? How, therefore, are we justified in the sight of God? Why is this doctrine of justification so important? We should by all means hold fast to this doctrine: We are justified without the deeds of the Law, by God's grace alone, for Christ's sake, through faith in Him, our Savior.

3. In the Third Article we furthermore confess the resurrection of the body. How does our Catechism explain these words? How is the doctrine of the resurrection of the body regarded by the unbelievers? Why do we nevertheless believe it? — God will raise the dead. How many of them will He bring to life again? All shall hear the voice of the Son of God and come forth. When will Christ raise all the dead? What is this "Last Day"? All the dead will rise again at the Last Day; but there will be a difference among them. What will this difference be? Who will come forth unto the resurrection of damnation? Who are they that have done evil? What will be their punishment on that day? May our heavenly Father preserve us from hell and damnation! — Who will come forth unto the resurrection of life? Who are they that have done good? What will God give to me and all believers on that day? From what shall we be free in eternal life? With whom shall we be? Not only shall we be with Him, united with Him by faith, what, too, has He promised us? 1 John 3, 2. Whom also shall we see in the heavenly kingdom? What do we read Ps. 16, 11? How will our bodies be after the resurrection? Like whose body will they be fashioned? What do we mean by adding: "This is most certainly true"?

And we confess the Holy Ghost,
Who from both fore'er proceeds,
Who upholds and comforts us
In the midst of fears and needs.
Blest and holy Trinity,
Praise forever be to Thee!

LESSON 39.

The Lord's Prayer.

THE INTRODUCTION.

Which is the Introduction?

Our Father who art in heaven.

What does this mean?

God would by these words tenderly invite us to believe that He is our true Father, and that we are His true children, so that we may with all boldness and confidence ask Him as dear children ask their dear father.

1. We have thus far considered the *Ten Commandments,* the holy *Law* of the Lord, in which our heavenly Father tells us what we should do and not do, how we, as His children, should live according to His will. We have considered the Law, which teaches us that we have not kept it, that we have sinned against God and therefore deserved His punishment, eternal death and damnation. — We have considered the *Three Articles of the Christian Faith,* which teach us the *Gospel,* the glad tidings of what the Triune God, our Redeemer, has done and will do for us to save us from sin and death, that we may live in His kingdom in everlasting innocence, righteousness, and blessedness. In its Third Part our Catechism explains to us the *Lord's Prayer,* that is, the prayer that our Lord once taught His apostles.

2. We read (Luke 11, 1) that, at a certain time, the disciples saw and, probably, heard their Master praying, speaking with His Father in heaven. This made so deep an impression upon them that one of them asked the Lord: *"Lord, teach us to pray."* The Lord gladly complied with this request and said: *"When ye pray, say: Our Father who art in heaven,"* etc. The Lord Himself gave His disciples this prayer, and therefore we call it the Lord's Prayer. We say this beautiful prayer *very often, daily,* and we should do so. Our Lord gave it to us. When we use this prayer, we know that we pray according to our Master's will. But reciting

this prayer is not enough, we must also understand what we are praying. We should ever better learn *what the words of this prayer mean.* Let us see how our Catechism explains them.

3. *"Our Father who art in heaven,"* thus our Lord teaches us to address *the true God, the Triune God.* What love God has bestowed upon us that we are called His children, and that we are permitted to call Him *Father!* 1 John 3, 1. Christ might have chosen different names to address God; but He teaches us to call God our *Father.* Why does He do so? *"God would by these words tenderly invite us to believe that He is our true Father and we are His true children."* When we come to God to speak to Him in our prayers, we should always believe and remember that God is our true Father, and that we are His true children. *You know that God is indeed your Father and you are His child.* It is true, we are all sinners, and the holy God hates sin, but our dear Lord has redeemed us from all sins and has earned for us forgiveness of sins and righteousness in the sight of God. *Through Christ, my Brother,* I have become God's true child, and God has become my true Father. *In Christ's name* I come to God and call Him Father, believing that for Christ's sake God really is my Father and I am His child. *"For this cause"* (because Christ is my Brother) *"I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."* Eph. 3, 14. 15. Remember that only those who believe in Jesus Christ may call God their Father. *Only children of God, through faith in Christ, can really pray to God.*

4. We pray to God, our Father. How *tenderly* does this name *invite* us to come to Him in our need! How this name does give us courage, *"so that we may with all boldness and confidence ask Him as dear children ask their dear father"!* A child is not afraid to come to his beloved father, to tell him with confidence all that he wants and needs. He knows that his dear father will gladly listen to him and help him. So it is with the children of God. They do not fear to come to

their Father, for He loves them. They do not doubt, but confidently believe that their dear Father *will hear their prayer and help them.* Our Father promised to do that. By the endearing name Father, God reminds us: I am your Father, you are my dear child. Come without fear and doubt; pray with all confidence. I will hear your prayer.

5. *"Our Father who art in heaven."* This Father of ours to whom we pray is not a weak, not an earthly father. God is the *heavenly Father;* He is the almighty God, the Lord of heaven and earth. He can do whatsoever He wills. With all confidence we come to Him and believe that He not only will hear our prayers, but *is also able to help us in every need and trouble.*

6. Our Lord teaches us to say: *"Our* Father who art in heaven." He reminds us of the fact that *all true believers are children of God, and that all children of God pray for and with each other.* "One God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in you all." Eph. 4, 6. I am not the only one praying to God, but a great host of fellow-men, all my brethren in Christ, are praying with me and for me. In Christ's name I pray to my Father in heaven for and with all my brethren; should I not therefore with all confidence ask my dear Father, as dear children ask their dear father?

REMEMBER: —

1. *Always pray in the name of Jesus Christ, your Savior. Through Him alone God is your true Father, and you are His true child. In His name you may and should ask your Father in heaven as dear children ask their dear father.*

2. *As God's child through Christ pray to your Father without fear and doubt, with the firm confidence that He will hear and accept your prayer.*

3. *The Father to whom you pray is the heavenly Father, the almighty God. To Him we pray with all confidence that He not only will, but also can answer our prayers and help us in all our troubles.*

MEMORIZE: —

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. 1 John 3, 1.

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. Eph. 3, 14. 15.

One God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in you all. Eph. 4, 6.

QUESTIONS.

1. Of what does the Third Part of our Catechism treat? 2. Why do we call this prayer the Lord's Prayer? 3. On what occasion did the Lord teach His disciples this prayer? 4. Why do we Christians use this prayer so often? 5. But it is not enough to recite this prayer if we would use it correctly; what else is needed? 6. Whom do we address when we say "Our *"Father"*? 7. Why did Jesus teach us to use the name Father in this prayer? 8. How does God become our Father, and how do we become His children? 9. In whose name should we therefore always pray? 10. Who only can really pray to God? 11. Of what is a child certain when he asks his father for something? 12. What may we confidently expect when we pray to our dear Father? 13. Of what do the words "who art in *heaven*" remind us in our prayer? 14. Our Father to whom we pray is the almighty God; what can He therefore do regarding our prayers? 15. Why does our Lord teach us to say, "*Our* Father"?

LESSON 40.

The Lord's Prayer.

THE FIRST PETITION.

Which is the First Petition?

Our Father who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy name.

What does this mean?

God's name is indeed holy in itself; but we pray in this petition that it may be holy among us also.

How is this done?

When the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, also lead a holy life according to it. This grant us, dear Father in heaven. But he

that teaches and lives otherwise than God's Word teaches, profanes the name of God among us. From this preserve us, Heavenly Father!

1. *"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,"* this is our first petition. It is a matter of utmost importance that God's name be hallowed among us; for this reason our Lord teaches us to pray for it in the first place. *"God's name is indeed holy in itself."* God has a name above every other name. In heaven and earth there is no name higher or more sacred than the name of our heavenly Father; no name can be compared with it. It is holy in itself. We cannot and we need not *make it holy.* What, then, do we ask for in this petition? Since the name of our Father in heaven is so holy and so exalted, we pray *that it may be holy among us also,* that we, His children, may hold it sacred and use it rightly both in words and deeds.

2. *How is this done?* We shall place God's name above every other name in heaven and on earth and hold it holy, sacred, only when we rightly *know God as He is, and what He has done and will do for us, His children.* God has revealed Himself and His great name *only in His Word.* There alone we learn to know our heavenly Father and the great things He has done for our temporal and eternal welfare. We shall hold His name holy and sacred "when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity." God's Word must be preached among us without the admixture of any human thoughts and errors, just as God has given it to us, just as it reads. In God's Word we learn how great God, our Father, is, the perfectly holy and just God, and yet gracious, ever ready to forgive all our sins and heal all our transgressions, when we come to Him in the name of Christ; the almighty Ruler of heaven and earth and yet our dear Father in Christ, who pities those that fear Him, as a father pities his children. Ps. 103, 13. The more we learn from His Word how great our God is, the more we shall hold His name sacred, the more we shall exalt and praise it.

3. It is not enough that God's Word is taught and preached among us in its truth and purity, that we only hear it; we must also, as God's children, *lead a holy life according to it. By a holy life we honor the name of our Father.* If a child disobeys his father, if he leads a bad life, committing sins and crimes, he will not only bring dishonor upon himself, but he will also disgrace his father's name. Remember how the sons of Eli, the high priest, brought dishonor upon their father's fair name. 1 Sam. 2, 12. When, on the other hand, a child is obedient to his father, doing the will of his good father, leading an upright and honest life, his father will be honored by the good deeds of his son. We are children of God. We confess that He is our true Father. If we were to lead an ungodly life, how would His name be dishonored among men! But when we live according to our Father's Word and will, if we live in accordance with the Word of God, our friends and neighbors will see our good works. By our godly life we shall help others, too, to know and honor the great name of God. Our Savior says: *"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* Matt. 5, 16. — By our own strength we cannot preach the Word of God in its truth and purity among us, nor can we by our own strength lead a holy life according to it; therefore we pray: *Grant us, O Heavenly Father, the pure doctrine of Thy Word and a holy life according to it.*

4. As the name of our Father is glorified here on earth by the preaching of His pure Word and by our holy life, so it is dishonored by *false doctrine and an ungodly life.* In our sinful hearts we are always inclined *to teach and live otherwise than God's Word teaches,* and thus to profane the name of God. *"Thou that makest thy boast of the Law, through breaking the Law dishonorest thou God. For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you."* Rom. 2, 23. 24. Therefore we pray: *Preserve us, O Heavenly Father, for Christ's sake, from false doctrine and an ungodly life!*

REMEMBER: —

We pray in this petition: —

1. *Dear Heavenly Father, grant that we may always teach Thy Word in its truth and purity, and that we may always live in accordance with it, so that Thy name may be hallowed among us!*

2. *Dear Heavenly Father, preserve us from ever teaching and living otherwise than Thy Word teaches!*

MEMORIZE: —

Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Matt. 5, 16.

Thou that makest thy boast of the Law, through breaking the Law dishonorest thou God. For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you. Rom. 2, 23. 24.

QUESTIONS.

1. Why does Christ teach us to pray in the first place that God's name may be hallowed, held sacred, among us? 2. How is God's name in itself? 3. Why do we nevertheless pray that His name be hallowed? 4. What must we know before we shall hold God's name sacred as we should? 5. Where has God revealed Himself? 6. How, therefore, is God's name hallowed among us? 7. How must God's Word be taught among us? 8. What does it mean to teach God's Word in its truth and purity? 9. What, furthermore, is necessary if we wish to glorify our Father's name? 10. In what way is God's name honored by a godly life? 11. What does our Lord say Matt. 5, 16? 12. Who profanes God's name among us? 13. From what do we ask God to preserve us? 14. What are the two things for which we pray in the First Petition?

LESSON 41.

The Lord's Prayer.

THE SECOND PETITION.

Which is the Second Petition?

Our Father who art in heaven. Thy kingdom come.

What does this mean?

The kingdom of God comes indeed without our prayer, of itself; but we pray in this petition that it may come unto us also.

How is this done?

When our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead a godly life, here in time and hereafter in eternity.

1. *"Thy kingdom come,"* that is the Second Petition. We pray for the kingdom of our heavenly Father. In the Second Article of our faith we already heard of a kingdom, the *kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.* There we learned that our Lord has redeemed us from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, in order that we may be His own, and in His *kingdom* live under Him in everlasting innocence, righteousness, and blessedness. *Christ's kingdom and our Father's kingdom is the same thing.* Christ established this kingdom by His sufferings and death. All that believe in Christ belong to this kingdom. Christ is their Lord and King; He governs them, bestowing upon them in His kingdom all His gifts: forgiveness of sins, the grace of God, true righteousness, peace with God, etc. He protects them against all their enemies, against sin, Satan, and death. We also call this kingdom of our Father the *Kingdom of Grace,* or the *true Christian Church.* It has its beginning here on earth; but when our Lord and King will come again at the Last Day, He will lead it to His glory in heaven. Then we shall call this kingom the *Kingdom of Glory.*

2. Our Lord teaches us to pray for the *coming* of this kingdom. True, *"the kingdom of God comes indeed without our prayer, of itself."* Christ lives and reigns, and He gathers His congregation through the Gospel from all nations, and He will lead it to its heavenly glory even if we do not pray for it. But still the Lord teaches us to pray for the coming of His kingdom. We pray *"that it may come to us also."* It is God's will to give *us* His kingdom. Our Lord says: *"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."* Luke 12, 32. But God wants us to *pray* for His good gifts. We pray in this petition that our Father's kingdom may come to us also, that we, too,

may belong to His kingdom and remain in it, *"here in time and hereafter in eternity."*

3. *"How is this done?"* How does the kingdom of God come to us? The kingdom of God comes to us only through faith in Christ. Only those who believe in Him can enter the kingdom. But *"I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Christ, or come to Him."* (In what part of your Catechism did you learn this?) To bring us to Christ is *the work of the Holy Ghost.* He has called me to Christ and His grace by the Gospel. *"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."* John 3, 5. The kingdom of God, therefore, comes to us *"when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead a godly life."* The Holy Ghost can and will graciously, by the Gospel, work within our hearts, so that we believe God's holy Word, believe in Jesus Christ, our Savior; and in this way the kingdom of God will come to us.

4. The Holy Spirit does not only bring us to Christ, so that we, through faith, enter the kingdom of God, but He also *preserves us in the true faith;* by means of the Gospel He gives us strength to prove our faith *by a godly life* and thus remain in the kingdom to the end. He will lead us to the glory of our Lord, to the kingdom of glory in heaven. *"The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom."* 2 Tim. 4, 18. By the Holy Spirit the kingdom of God comes to me *"here in time"* (the Kingdom of Grace) *"and hereafter in eternity"* (the Kingdom of Glory). In this petition we especially pray our heavenly Father to grant us *the most precious gift — His Holy Ghost.*

5. But we do not only pray that the kingdom of God would come to *us* and remain with us, we also pray that it may come to *all men* who as yet are not members of this kingdom. We pray that all men may become true believers in Christ through the preaching of the Gospel. This work, preaching the Gospel to all nations, we call *mission-work.*

The Second Petition is the great mission-prayer of the Church. The Lord admonishes us: *"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into His harvest."* Matt. 9, 38.

REMEMBER: —

1. *In this petition we pray: Dear heavenly Father, grant me Thy Holy Spirit that by His grace I may believe in Jesus Christ, my King, and by faith in Him lead a godly life, so that I may be with my Savior in His kingdom, here in time and hereafter in eternity.*

2. *Do not forget to pray for our missions when you say this petition. Mission is the work our Lord has entrusted to all Christians, saying: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."* Mark 16, 15.

MEMORIZE: —

Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Luke 12, 32.

Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into His harvest. Matt. 9, 38.

The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom. 2 Tim. 4, 18.

QUESTIONS.

1. How did Christ establish His kingdom on earth? 2. Who belongs to it? 3. Who is Lord and King of this kingdom? 4. What does Christ bestow upon His own in His kingdom? 5. From whom does He protect and against whom does He defend us? 6. What do we also call the kingdom of Christ? 7. What will Christ do with His kingdom when He shall come in His glory at the Last Day? 8. What shall we then call this kingdom? 9. What does our Lord teach us to pray in behalf of His kingdom? 10. What, indeed, is true concerning the coming of His kingdom? 11. Why do we nevertheless pray for His kingdom? 12. How does the kingdom of God come to us? 13. Why do we need the Holy Ghost for this purpose? 14. The Holy Spirit does not only bring us to Christ and into His kingdom, what does He also perform in us? 15. What do we call the work for which we are especially praying in this petition?

LESSON 42.

The Lord's Prayer.

THE THIRD PETITION.

What is the Third Petition.

Our Father who art in heaven, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

What does this mean?

The good and gracious will of God is done indeed without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also.

How is this done?

When God breaks and hinders every evil counsel and will which would not let us hallow God's name nor let His kingdom come, such as the will of the devil, the world, and our flesh; but strengthens and preserves us steadfast in His Word and faith unto our end. This is His gracious and good will.

1. We pray in this petition that the will of our Father in heaven may be done. *His will is a good and gracious one.* Being the will of our heavenly Father, how could it be otherwise than good and gracious? He wills, or desires, that His name be hallowed among us, that His kingdom may come to us and all men, or, in other words, *that all men be saved. "God will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."* 1 Tim. 2, 4. He earnestly desires that His saving Gospel be preached to all men, that all men, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, may believe in Christ and through Him have eternal life. This is most assuredly the good and gracious will of our heavenly Father.

2. We pray that this will of our Father *may be done on earth, that it may prevail. "The good and gracious will of God is done indeed without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also,"* that His gracious will may prevail against all such as try to hinder our salvation.

3. *How is the will of our heavenly Father done?* Our Catechism answers: *"When God breaks and hinders every evil counsel and will which would not let us hallow God's name nor let His kingdom come, such as the will of the devil, the world, and our flesh."* There is an evil counsel and will here on earth. It is the will of the *devil,* the *world,* that is, all godless men, who are in the service of Satan, and of the *flesh,* our own sinful heart, which is always in accord with Satan and the world. These our enemies do not want us to hallow God's name, to come into Christ's kingdom or to remain therein, to remain steadfast in faith, to remain true to Christ, our Savior. Theirs is an evil will, which desires to *lead us astray from God, our Father, into sin, into the power and the kingdom of the devil.* If their evil will and counsel prevails, we are lost. Against these mighty enemies we are powerless; we ourselves have no strength whatever to resist them and their temptations. Therefore we daily pray our Father in heaven to break and hinder their evil will and counsel, in order that they may not be able to fulfil their evil desires.

4. God sincerely desires us to be saved, to obtain eternal life. But our Lord says: *"He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."* Matt. 24, 13. We cannot endure by our own strength. *"Ye are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation."* 1 Pet. 1, 5. Therefore we pray our dear Father to *"strengthen and preserve us steadfast in His Word and faith unto our end."* We ask Him for Christ's sake to grant us strength to remain steadfast in His *Word,* to continue to hear, read, and use it. By means of the Gospel the Holy Spirit will *preserve our faith* in our Lord and Savior; through faith He will give us strength gladly to do His will and to live according to His commandments. In this way God will preserve us *unto our end,* to our dying hour, and thus His gracious and good will is done.

5. God, our dear Father, *directs and guides our whole life* according to this will of His to lead us to salvation. For this purpose our Father sometimes will permit *sufferings and*

troubles to come over us. In such times especially we should pray: *"Thy will be done,"* my Father! Give me strength to remain steadfast and faithful in all sufferings and cheerfully to submit to your gracious will. Even our Lord Jesus Christ prayed in the hour of His deep agony: *"Not as I will, but as Thou wilt."* Matt. 26, 39.

6. The *first three petitions* belong together. They are connected by the words *"on earth as it is in heaven."* We pray that our Father's name may be hallowed on earth as it is hallowed in heaven, that His kingdom may come to us on earth as it is in heaven, and that His gracious will may be done among us on earth as it is done in heaven. *We ask our heavenly Father for His heavenly gifts.* These gifts we most urgently need, and therefore our Lord teaches us to pray for them first of all.

REMEMBER: —

1. *We pray in this petition: My dear heavenly Father, break and hinder every evil will of my enemies, the devil, the world, and my own flesh, that I may hallow Thy name and Thy kingdom may come to me.*

2. *My dear heavenly Father, strengthen and preserve me in Thy Word and in true faith unto my end, to my dying hour, that Thy gracious and good will may be done.*

MEMORIZE: —

God will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. 1 Tim. 2, 4.

Ye are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation. 1 Pet. 1, 5.

He which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Phil. 1, 6.

QUESTIONS.

1. We pray that God's will may be done among us. What is God's will toward us? 2. What is this will, therefore, called in our Catechism? 3. This good and gracious will of God is indeed done without our prayer; why do we nevertheless pray that it may be done? 4. There is an evil will and counsel against us,

the children of God. Whose will is this? 5. What is their evil will and desire against us? 6. Why must we ask God to break and hinder their evil will? 7. God earnestly desires us to be saved, to obtain eternal life. Who only will be saved and obtain eternal life? Matt. 24, 13. 8. By whose power are we kept unto salvation? 1 Pet. 1, 5. 9. How do we, therefore, pray? 10. Why is it necessary for us to remain steadfast in the Word of God? 11. Unto what time will God preserve our faith through the Gospel? 12. Why does God sometimes permit suffering and trouble to come over His children? 13. How should we pray especially in such times? 14. What gifts do we pray for in the first three petitions? 15. Why does Christ teach us to pray first of all for His heavenly gifts?

LESSON 43.

The Lord's Prayer.

THE FOURTH PETITION.

Which is the Fourth Petition?

Our Father who art in heaven, Give us this day our daily bread.

What does this mean?

God gives daily bread indeed without our prayer, also to all the wicked; but we pray in this petition that He would lead us to know it and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

What, then, is meant by "daily bread"?

Everything that belongs to the support and wants of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, field, cattle, money, goods, a pious spouse, pious children, pious servants, pious and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, discipline, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.

1. For *our daily bread* our Lord bids us pray in this petition. By daily bread everything is meant that *belongs to the support and wants of our body,* everything we need to support our life. Our Catechism enumerates quite a number of such things. For all these things we pray as far as we need them for our daily bread. We do not pray for *riches,* for many comforts or luxuries, but for that which we need. We pray: "*Give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with*

food convenient for me, lest I be full, and deny Thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." Prov. 30, 8. 9. The apostle says: "*Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.*" 1 Tim. 6, 8.

2. We pray for our daily bread. "*God gives daily bread indeed without our prayer*"; He gives it "*also to all the wicked,*" who cannot and will not pray for it. "*He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*" Matt. 5, 45. If God gives daily bread without our prayer, why, then, do we pray for it? "*We pray in this petition that He would lead us to know it,*" that is, we pray that God may lead us to know that our daily bread, all we have and receive in this life, is *His gracious gift.* Wicked, unbelieving men do not acknowledge this. They believe that they are earning their daily bread by means of their labor or receiving it by other natural means. Christians also often forget that all their earthly goods are the gift of their Father in heaven. Therefore we pray that God would grant us to know that every good gift comes from above, from Him, our Father. "*The eyes of all wait upon Thee, and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.*" Ps. 145, 15. 16. When we acknowledge this, *we shall receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.* Then our daily bread, all our earthly goods, *will be a blessing to us,* a blessing for both our body and our soul. Knowing that our daily bread is God's gift, we receive it with thanksgiving; therefore we pray before each meal and, having finished it, say grace.

3. Our Lord tells us to pray for *our* daily bread. It is true, our daily bread is the gift of our Father in heaven, but He will generally bestow this gift upon us *by means of our labor.* God wants us to work, and He will provide what we need for this life. The bread that we eat should be the bread *that is honestly coming to us.* "*If any would not work, neither should he eat.*" 2 Thess. 3, 10. — We do not say *my,*

but *our* bread, because we *include our neighbor* in our prayer, asking God to give also him his daily bread. This reminds us of our duty willingly to help our neighbor whenever he is in need and want. Our Father in heaven very often gives us more than we need for our own support and the support of our family; He does this for the purpose that *we may have to give to those that are in need.* God, then, desires to give our neighbor his daily bread through us. *"Deal thy bread to the hungry."* Is. 58, 7.

4. We pray God to give us our daily bread *this day.* Our Lord reminds us *that we should not be anxiously concerned for the morrow.* We have a rich and kind Father in heaven, who cares for us, for our life and welfare. We pray to Him for our bread to-day and every day, and we know that He will not forsake us. Our Lord admonishes us: *"Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself."* Matt. 6, 34.

5. In the Fourth Petition we pray for our *daily bread,* for all that is necessary for our life and bodily welfare here on earth. In the first three petitions we pray for *heavenly gifts,* for the gifts which we need for our soul, for our eternal welfare. Our Lord in this way teaches us that the heavenly gifts are much more important, that we should pray for them first of all. *"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."* Matt. 6, 33.

REMEMBER: —

1. *We pray in this petition: My dear heavenly Father, give me this day my daily bread. Grant me grace to know and acknowledge that my daily bread is Thy gracious gift in order that I may receive it from Thy hand with thanksgiving.*

2. *Do not forget to say your prayers at meals. Thereby you confess that your daily bread is the gift of your Father in heaven, and you show your thankfulness to Him.*

3. *Pray also for your neighbor and give from your abundance whenever he is in need.*

MEMORIZE: —

He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Matt. 5, 45.

Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me. Prov. 30, 8.

Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. 1 Tim. 6, 8.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Matt. 6, 33.

QUESTIONS.

1. What is meant in this petition by "daily bread"? 2. Why does the Lord teach us to pray for our daily bread? 3. Wherewith should we be content? 4. Does not God give us our daily bread without our Prayer? 5. On whom even does He bestow this gift? 6. Why, then, do we pray for our daily bread? 7. Why do we pray God to lead us to know that our daily bread comes from Him? 8. How will we receive our daily bread when we know that it is He who gives it to us? 9. Why does our Lord teach us to pray for *our* daily bread? 10. Why do we not say *my*, but *our* bread? 11. Of what should this remind us? 12. Why do we add the words *this day*? 13. Why do we not need to be anxious for the morrow? 14. What does our Lord teach us by putting the petition for our daily bread after the petitions for His heavenly gifts?

LESSON 44.

The Lord's Prayer.

THE FIFTH PETITION.

Which is the Fifth Petition?

Our Father who art in heaven, forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

What does this mean?

We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look upon our sins, nor on their account deny our prayer; for we are worthy of none of the things for which we pray, neither have we deserved them; but that He would grant them all to us by grace; for we daily sin much and indeed deserve nothing but punishment. So will we also heartily forgive and readily do good to those who sin against us.

1. *"And forgive us our trespasses,"* thus the Lord teaches us to pray in the Fifth Petition. That means, as our Catechism explains these words: *"We pray in this petition that our Father would not look upon our sins."* A child that has disobeyed his father approaches him sorrowfully, asks his forgiveness, and promises to be more obedient in future. We, the children of God, do the very same thing. Every day we come to our heavenly Father with a contrite heart and ask His *forgiveness.* Daily we confess that we have sinned again. We are deeply sorry that again we have been disobedient to His good will, that we have deserved His punishment. But we also know that God is *our gracious, loving Father,* always willing to forgive us our many sins. We know that Christ has paid the *ransom for our transgressions* and earned God's forgiveness for us. In our Savior's name, trusting in Him, we come to God every day and pray with deep shame, but also with firm confidence: My dear Father in heaven, I, a poor sinner, come to Thee and humbly confess that again I have trespassed and sinned against Thee. Do not look upon my sins, do not punish me as I have deserved, but regard Thy Son's righteousness and for His sake forgive me all my sins. We pray as did the prodigal son: *"Father, I have sinned against heaven and in Thy sight, and I am no more worthy to be called Thy son."* Luke 15, 21. However, accept me again for Christ's sake.

2. We have a *special reason* for asking God's forgiveness in our prayers. We pray to God for many blessings, for many precious gifts, both heavenly and earthly. But we are sinners; *"we are worthy of none of the things for which we pray, neither have we deserved them."* If God would look upon our unworthiness and sin, how could He grant us our petitions? *"For we daily sin much and deserve nothing but punishment."* As long as our sins separate us from God, we are certain that God will not hear us. Our prayers would indeed be in vain. Therefore we pray to our Father that He would not look upon our sins, *"nor on their account deny our prayer,"* as we have so well deserved. We pray that He would grant us His forgiveness and give us all His rich

blessings *by grace, for Christ's sake.* In Christ's name we come to our Father and confidently pray with the *publican* in the Temple: *"God be merciful to me, a sinner."* Luke 18, 13.

3. Our Lord adds something to this petition. He says: *"As we forgive those who trespass against us."* These words contain a *promise* on our part. Because God so graciously and willingly forgives us our many and great sins, we promise that *we also will forgive those who sin against us.* There are such as sin against us, wrong and grieve us with word or deed. But how small are their faults over against the great and grievous sins we have committed against our Father in heaven! Having received the gracious forgiveness of our Father, how could we do otherwise than forgive also those who trespass against us? Willingly we promise to forgive them, and to do so *heartily, from our hearts,* as our Father has forgiven us, and not only to forgive them, but *readily to do good to them.* Does not our Father do the same thing to us? We sin against Him and grieve Him daily, and nevertheless He not only forgives us, but He also blesses us every day with all His gifts for body and soul. If, on the other hand, we refuse to forgive our brother, we shall not obtain forgiveness from our Father. *"When ye stand praying, forgive if ye have aught against any, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."* Mark 11, 25. 26. (Read carefully the beautiful parable of our Lord about the *wicked servant,* Matt. 18, 23—35.)

REMEMBER: —

1. *We pray in this petition: My dear Father in heaven, do not look upon my sins and do not on their account deny my prayer. I am not worthy of any of the things for which I pray, but on account of Thy grace hear my prayer and forgive me all my sins for Christ's sake.*

2. *We promise in this petition: My dear Father in heaven, as Thou hast forgiven me the multitude of my sins and hast*

granted me daily all Thy precious blessings, so will I show Thee my gratitude by heartily forgiving those who sin against me and readily doing good to them. Grant me grace to do this, dear heavenly Father.

MEMORIZE: —

Father, I have sinned against heaven and in Thy sight and am no more worthy to be called Thy son. Luke 15, 21.

God be merciful to me, a sinner. Luke 18, 13.

When ye stand praying, forgive if ye have aught against any, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses. Mark 11, 25. 26.

QUESTIONS.

1. What is meant by the word "trespasses" in this petition? 2. What do we ask our heavenly Father to do in this prayer? 3. How do we know that God will forgive us our sins? 4. How has Christ earned forgiveness of sins for us? 5. For whose sake, therefore, do we ask forgiveness? 6. What special reason have we to include this petition in our prayers? 7. Why are we unworthy of the things for which we pray? 8. What, on the contrary, have we deserved? 9. What moves God to hear our prayers? 10. What words does our Lord add to this petition? 11. What promise do we give God when we add these words? 12. How are the sins our neighbor commits against us to be regarded as compared with our sins against God? 13. What should we therefore willingly do? 14. What will happen to us if we do not heartily forgive our neighbor? 15. What must we be willing to do in addition to forgiving our neighbor? 16. What should induce us to forgive our neighbor when he trespasses against us?

LESSON 45.

The Lord's Prayer.

THE SIXTH PETITION.

Which is the Sixth Petition?

Our Father who art in heaven, lead us not into temptation.

What does this mean?

God indeed tempts no one; but we pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us, so that the devil, the

world, and our flesh may not deceive us, nor seduce us into misbelief, despair, and other great shame and vice; and though we be assailed by them, that still we may finally overcome and obtain the victory.

1. *"And lead us not into temptation,"* this is the Sixth Petition. Our Catechism explains it in the first place by saying: *"God indeed tempts no one,"* that is, He tempts no one *for evil.* That is most certainly true. Our heavenly Father is the holy God. He hates sin and all those who willingly commit it. How could He tempt us to sin, try to lead us into evil ways which He hates? Scripture tells us: *"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man; but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed."* Jas. 1, 13. 14.

2. As God does not tempt us for evil, why, then, do we pray our Father not to lead us into temptation? We pray *"that God would guard and keep us" that our enemies may not lead us into sin and shame.* There are such as always try to lead us, the children of God, into sin, those *enemies* of whom we heard in the Third Petition — the *devil,* the *world,* and our *own flesh.* Our most dangerous foe is the *devil. "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist steadfast in the faith."* 1 Pet. 5, 8. 9. Remember how he tempted *Adam and Eve* in Paradise and seduced them to fall into sin. Our next enemy is the *world,* that is, all the wicked men around us. How often do our friends or schoolmates entice us to do wrong! *"My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."* Prov. 1, 10. The third enemy is *our own flesh,* our old sinful heart, which is full of evil lust. Our own lust draws us away from God and entices us to sin.

3. These our enemies have an *evil will* against us. They want to lead us away from God and our salvation, to lead us again into the kingdom of Satan and sin. They try with all their power and cunning to *deceive* us; they try to give us the impression that it would be good for us to follow their

temptations. By such enticements they try to seduce us to lead us astray from God and His Word, into *misbelief,* into a wrong faith, or into *despair,* so that we abandon all hope for our salvation. (Remember *Cain,* Gen. 4, 15, and *Judas,* Matt. 27, 4. 5.) Or they try to lead us into *other great shame and vice,* into sins that will bring shame upon us, to yield to evil passions, which will destroy our faith.

4. Against these mighty enemies we are *powerless.* We could not seriously think of taking up the fight against them by our own power. If we did, we would soon learn to our sorrow that we cannot successfully resist their temptations. Our enemies would gain the victory over us. In this our pitiful condition we come to *our Father in heaven,* who has promised us His help, and who is always with us. We pray to Him in the name of our Savior not to lead us into temptation, that is, we pray that God would *guard* or watch over us that such temptations may not come near us, that He would graciously defend us against them. — *It is true, temptations will come.* We live in this sinful world, which is full of temptations. The devil "walketh about" to devour the children of God, and our flesh tempts us with evil lust. These enemies will again and again *assail* us to gain their evil ends and desires. *And it is for our good that God permits them to do so.* But we pray God to *keep* us steadfast in all these temptations, to *strengthen* us in order that we may fight the good fight of faith against them. We pray to our Father that He may *preserve* us in the true faith, so that we shall *finally,* in the end, *overcome all temptations and obtain the victory.* Our heavenly Father will hear our prayer. *"God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able."* 1 Cor. 10, 13. According to His good and gracious will He wants us to be faithful to the end and to be saved.

REMEMBER: —

1. *We pray in this petition: My dear heavenly Father, guard and keep me against my powerful enemies, the devil, the world, and my flesh; hinder their evil will that their temptations may not approach me.*

2. *We pray in this petition: My dear heavenly Father, be with me in all temptations, whenever my enemies assail me, and grant me grace to fight the good fight of faith. Keep me in the true faith in Christ, my Lord, that I may finally overcome all temptations and obtain the victory.*

MEMORIZE: —

Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist steadfast in the faith. 1 Pet. 5, 8. 9.

My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. Prov. 1, 10.

God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able. 1 Cor. 10, 13.

QUESTIONS.

1. Which is the Sixth Petition? 2. What does God indeed not do? 3. Why are we certain that God will not lead any one into temptation? 4. Why, then, do we pray God not to lead us into temptation? 5. Who are our enemies that lead us into temptation? 6. Why is the devil compared to a roaring lion? 7. Who is our second enemy? 8. What do we understand by our own flesh? 9. What is the evil will of these our enemies against us? 10. Into what do they try to lead us? 11. Who alone can help us against our powerful enemies? 12. What does it mean when we pray that God would guard us against our enemies? 13. When their temptations do assail us, what do we pray our Father in heaven to do? 14. What makes us certain that God will hear our prayer?

LESSON 46.

The Lord's Prayer.

THE SEVENTH PETITION AND THE CONCLUSION.

Which is the Seventh Petition?

Our Father who art in heaven, deliver us from evil.

What does this mean?

We pray in this petition, as the sum of all, that our Father in heaven would deliver us from every evil of body

and soul, property and honor, and finally, when our last hour has come, grant us a blessed end, and graciously take us from this vale of tears to Himself in heaven.

Which is the Conclusion of the Lord's Prayer?

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

What is meant by the word "Amen"?

That I should be certain that these petitions are acceptable to our Father in heaven, and heard; for He Himself has commanded us so to pray, and has promised to hear us. Amen, Amen, that is, yea, yea, it shall be so.

1. *"But deliver us from evil." "We pray in this petition, as the sum of all";* in this petition we sum up all the others. We include in the word *"evil"* our misfortunes and troubles of every kind, all our wants and needs: all the ailments of our *body,* such as sickness and the like; everything that is hurtful to our *soul,* sin with all its fearful consequences; anything that injures or destroys our *property,* such as is done by fire, water, or bad, evil-minded men; whatever harms our *honor,* loss of our good name through lies and calumnies, etc. All these things we sum up in the word *evil.*

2. We pray that our Father would *deliver* us from all these evils. We beseech Him to *spare* us from as many evils as He sees fit. We know that days of sorrow and afflictions will indeed come to us. It is our Father's good will that *"we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."* Acts 14, 22. God sends us afflictions because He *loves* us, His children, because in His wisdom He knows that it is good and salutary for us. *"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."* Heb. 12, 6. We willingly submit to His will. But whenever the Lord has afflicted us, in every need and distress, we lift our hearts to Him, the Father of mercies, and *pray Him to be with us in our affliction,* to help us *bear the cross* He has laid upon us. We ask Him that He would turn every affliction *to our benefit* and in His own good time take it from us.

It is our earnest prayer that through everything that seems evil to us He would keep us steadfast in faith to everlasting life.

3. True, as long as we live here on earth, we shall not be entirely free from evil. On earth we are living in a *"vale of tears."* But the time will come when *"the Lord shall deliver me from every evil and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom."* 2 Tim. 4, 18. And when this time has come, *our last hour,* the hour of our departure from this world, we pray *that our Father would grant us a blessed end, and graciously take us from this vale of tears to Himself in heaven,* and thus wholly deliver us from all evil. In that hour we shall say: *"Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation."* Luke 2, 29. 30. When our dear Father takes us to Himself in heaven, all our prayers will have been granted, all earthly sorrow and affliction will be at an end; we shall have and enjoy with our Father and our Lord all His heavenly gifts.

4. In the Conclusion of the Lord's Prayer we say: *"Thine is the kingdom."* We mean to say: Thou alone art my Lord and King, from whom I am to seek help, and who certainly *will* hear my prayer. *"Thine is the power":* that is, Thou alone art the almighty God, Thou alone hast the power to grant my petitions. And so *"Thine is the glory";* that is, all glory, all honor, all praise, shall be given to Thee alone *forever and ever.*

5. The word *"Amen"* with which we conclude our prayer means, as our Catechism explains it: *"Yea, yea, it shall be so."* We express in this word our assurance that our prayers are *acceptable to our Father in heaven,* and that *He will hear them.* May we really be certain that our petitions are acceptable to God? Most assuredly. *Our Lord Himself has given us this prayer,* He has taught us these petitions, and *"has commanded us so to pray."* When in true devotion, in the name of our Redeemer, we come to our Father and pray these petitions, how could it be otherwise than that our

Father is well pleased! And He Himself, our Father, has so often *promised that He will hear us,* that He will grant our prayer. Our Lord has promised us: *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you."* John 16, 23. How could we doubt that God will hear us when we pray in Christ's name, according to His will? — Indeed, it sometimes seems to us as if God *did not hear* our prayers. But it only seems so; God hears every true prayer. But we must not forget that God grants us our petitions *in His own manner,* which we often do not understand. He does not always grant our petitions at once, but *at His appointed time,* at the time He has appointed for His help, which, indeed, is the best time for us. Confidently we always want to conclude our prayers with, *"Amen; yea, yea, it shall be so."*

REMEMBER: —

1. *We pray in this petition: My dear Father in heaven, lead me through all my afflictions according to Thy gracious will and pleasure, and when my last hour has come, grant me a blessed end and take me up to Thee in heaven, and so deliver me from all evil.*

2. *We are certain that this, our Lord's Prayer, as well as all the prayers we are bringing before God in accordance with it, are acceptable to God and heard; for He Himself has commanded us so to pray and promised to hear us.*

MEMORIZE: —

We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. Acts 14, 22.

The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom. 2 Tim. 4, 18.

Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation. Luke 2, 29. 30.

QUESTIONS.

1. What do we mean when we say: "We pray in this petition, *as the sum of all*"? 2. What is meant in this petition by the word "evil"? 3. Why does God sometimes send us afflictions? 4. What

do we ask our Father in heaven to do when He has afflicted us? 5. To what should He turn all our afflictions, all that seems evil to us? 6. What should God preserve in us at such times? 7. Why do we call this life a "vale of tears"? 8. When, finally, will God deliver us from all evil? 9. What kind of end do we ask our heavenly Father to grant us? 10. Why will all our sorrows then be at an end. 11. What do the words of the Conclusion mean? 12. What the word "Amen"? 13. What do we mean to express by adding this word? 14. Why may we be certain that all our petitions are acceptable to God? 15. Why are we certain that God will always hear our prayers? 16. How will God hear our prayers and grant us His help?

LESSON 47.

How We Should Pray.

REVIEW LESSON.

1. When we pray, we frequently use the prayer which the Lord has given us. It really does contain everything we need, everything we may pray for. But we also use other prayers; we bring our petitions before God in our own words, or offer praise and thanks to Him. This is well-pleasing to our Father in heaven. But we must not forget *that all our prayers should be in accordance with the Lord's Prayer.* He has given us His prayer also for this purpose, that we should *learn from it how to pray.* The Lord's Prayer should be *the model for all our prayers.* If that is our model, we are certain that we are praying according to God's will. Let us see what the Lord's Prayer teaches us in this respect. *Let us learn how we should pray.*

2. Whom do we address in the Lord's Prayer? Who is "our Father in heaven"? Our Father in heaven is *the only true, the Triune God, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.* To Him we pray, and to Him alone. Such is His will. *"Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."* Matt. 4, 10. Against which commandment do we sin when we pray to any one but the true God? We pray only to the true God because He alone is *able* and *willing* to hear and answer our prayer.

3. The Lord teaches us to call the Triune God *"our Father."* Why does Christ teach us to use this dear name? Through whom is God our true Father and we His true children? In whose name should we pray? Our Savior says: *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you."* John 16, 23. In the Fifth Petition we learn why it is so necessary to pray in Jesus' name, trusting in His merits. We daily sin much. We deserve nothing but punishment. We pray that God would not look upon our sins, but graciously answer our prayers for Christ's sake, who has earned forgiveness of sins for us. Only *in Christ* is God well pleased with us; *only for His sake will our prayers be heard and answered.*

4. Christ teaches us to address God as our Father, to believe that in Christ He is indeed our true Father. By this endearing name our Lord would *encourage* and *tenderly invite us* to come to Him as His children and ask Him with all confidence. We should always pray with confidence, never doubting that God for Christ's sake *will hear us and grant our prayers. "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."* Matt. 21, 22. We are praying to the *almighty God,* who is able to give all good things; we pray to Him who is our *Father,* who has promised to hear our prayers.

5. For what do we pray in the first three petitions? For what in the Fourth Petition? We learn from this that we may pray for *everything that is needful for our welfare, both spiritual and temporal things. "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."* Mark 11, 24. In how many petitions do we ask for the heavenly or spiritul things, which we need for our souls? In one petition the Lord teaches us to pray for our daily bread, for our wants here on earth. Whenever we pray, we should first of all pray for those gifts which we need for our salvation. *"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,"* our Lord tells us. Matt. 6, 33. Above all we should pray for the gift of God's pure Word, for the Holy

Ghost, in order that by His grace we may believe His holy Word and lead a godly life, that His will may be done among us, and that we may remain faithful to our Lord and obtain eternal life.

6. The Fourth Petition follows the one in which our Lord teaches us to pray that God's good and gracious will may be done. When we are praying for our daily bread, asking God for the things we need for our body and our temporal welfare, *we should submit everything to God's will,* that is, we should pray that God would grant us these gifts, *if it is His will, if they tend to His glory and to our welfare. "This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us."* 1 John 5, 14.

7. Our Lord teaches us to say not *my,* but *our* Father; indeed, throughout the whole prayer we always include our neighbor in our petitions. He wants us to *pray for our neighbors,* not only for our friends and relatives, but for *all men,* even for our *enemies. "Pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you."* Matt. 5, 44.

8. In the last three petitions the Lord tells us to bring our cares and troubles, our afflictions and sorrows of every kind, before the Lord. Indeed, we ought to pray *at all times. "Pray without ceasing."* 1 Thess. 5, 17. Especially, however, we should pray in times of *trouble and need. "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."* Ps. 50, 15.

REMEMBER: —

1. *Always pray to the true God, the Father of your Lord Jesus Christ, who through Him is also your Father. Come to Him in Christ's name. That is His will, and He alone can and will hear such prayers.*

2. *Pray in Christ's name, with full confidence that your prayer is acceptable to God and heard. Pray in the same manner as a dear child asks his dear father.*

3. *Ask Him for all you need for the welfare of your body and soul; in the first place, however, for the welfare of your*

soul, for your salvation. In asking for temporal blessings submit your will to God's will. Not my, but Thy will be done, my heavenly Father.

4. *Do not forget to include in your prayer your neighbor, all men, even your enemies. Finish your prayer with a confident "Amen; yea, yea, it shall be so."*

MEMORIZE: —

Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve. Matt. 4, 10.

This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us. 1 John 5, 14.

All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive. Matt. 21, 22.

Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me. Ps. 50, 15.

LESSON 48.

Holy Baptism.

What Baptism Is.

What is Baptism?

Baptism is not simple water only, but it is the water comprehended in God's command and connected with God's word.

Which is that word of God?

Christ, our Lord, says in the last chapter of Matthew: Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

1. After having explained the Lord's Prayer, our Catechism tells us about *Holy Baptism.* You all, most probably, have seen children baptized, and some of you, perhaps, also adults. You yourselves were baptized in your infancy in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. You, therefore, should learn what Baptism is, and what it

gives and profits. Let us hear what our Catechism has to say about this sacred act. In the first place, it explains *what Baptism is.*

2. *"Baptism is not simple water only."* In baptism there is indeed *water.* The person to be baptized is sprinkled with water, with simple, common, natural water. We must use water in baptism and nothing else. *Water is the external means* which God Himself has instituted for baptism. But Baptism is not only water, it is more; *"it is the water comprehended in God's command and connected with God's word."* In baptism there is both God's command and God's word.

3. Baptism is the water comprehended in God's command, that is, *we use the water in baptism because God has commanded it.* Without this command of God Baptism would be water only. Before our Lord ascended into heaven, He gave His disciples this command: *"Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."* Holy Baptism, therefore, is an act instituted and ordained by God. For that reason we call it a *sacred act.* Christ gave this command to His *disciples, to His Church, to all Christians.* The called ministers of Christ, our pastors, ordinarily administer baptism; but in cases of necessity every Christian can and should perform it. Christ commands us to *baptize;* that means, He commands us to *apply* the water *by washing or sprinkling the person to be baptized with water, or by immersing him into the water.*

4. *Baptism is the water connected with God's word.* The word which Christ has commanded us to use in baptism is this: *"In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."* This word must always be connected with the water to make it a Baptism. *"Without the word of God the water is simple water, and no baptism. But with the word it is a baptism, that is, a gracious water of life." — We are baptized in the name of the Triune God.* What does this mean? God's name is God Himself, as we have learned in

the Second Commandment. We are baptized in God the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. By baptism we are *received into communion with the Triune God.* He gives Himself to us *as our Father* and accepts us *as His children,* He bestows upon us all His blessings, all that He has done for us to save us. *With* the word of God baptism is indeed a gracious water of life.

5. Our Lord commands us to baptize *all nations,* that is, *all human beings,* old and young, men and women. *"Preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."* Mark 16, 15. 16. Baptism is necessary to salvation; consequently God wants all who believe in Him to be baptized. But a *certain distinction* should be made. Those who are old enough to be instructed we baptize after they have been *previously* taught the main doctrine of the Word of God, *confess their faith* in Jesus Christ, and *desire to be baptized* and thus become Christians.

6. *Little children* are baptized by us soon after their birth, before they are able to learn the Word of God. We teach them after their baptism in our homes and schools and churches. We baptize our little children because in the word *nations* the children, too, are included. We baptize them because our Lord says: *"Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God."* Mark 10, 14. Christ bids us bring our little children to Him that He may bless them. We can do this only by means of Holy Baptism. Without baptism they are under God's wrath, and their sins are not forgiven. By baptism the Holy Ghost Himself brings them to Christ and kindles in them the true faith in Him. God becomes their Father, and they are made His children.

REMEMBER: —

1. *Holy Baptism is a sacred act instituted by God. God Himself has commanded us to baptize, that is, to apply water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. It is the water comprehended in God's command.*

2. *Baptism is the water connected with God's word. In baptism the water must be applied with these words: "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." By baptism we are received into communion with the Triune God. He becomes our Father, and we are made His children.*

MEMORIZE: —

Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Matt. 28, 19.

Preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Mark 16, 15. 16.

Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Mark 10, 14.

QUESTIONS.

1. What is the external means which God has instituted for Holy Baptism? 2. What kind of water is to be used when we baptize a person? 3. In what is the water of Baptism comprehended? 4. What is meant when we say: "The water is comprehended in God's command"? 5. Recite the words of God's command. Matt. 28, 19. 6. To whom did Christ give this command? 7. Who does now ordinarily administer Holy Baptism? 8. Who may and should do it in cases of necessity? 9. What does the word *baptize* mean? 10. What is the word of God with which the water in baptism is connected? 11. What does it mean to be baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost? 12. What does God become to us in baptism? 13. Whom did Christ command us to baptize? 14. Whom do we generally baptize? 15. How can you prove that it is right to baptize little children? 16. What does Christ say about the little children Mark 10, 14?

LESSON 49.

Holy Baptism.

WHAT BAPTISM GIVES, OR PROFITS.

What does Baptism give, or profit?

It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.

Which are such words and promises of God?

Christ, our Lord, says in the last chapter of Mark: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but He that believeth not shall be damned.

1. In our last lesson we learned what Baptism is. *"Baptism is not simple water only, but it is the water comprehended in God's command and connected with God's word."* Now the question arises, What good does it do one to be baptized? *What does Baptism give, or profit?* Baptism must indeed be a great and wonderful thing. God Himself instituted it. He put His name, His word, into it. Where His name and His word are, there, indeed, must be great, eternal blessings.

2. Our Catechism answers the question: *"What does Baptism give, or profit?* by saying: *"It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare."* *Three* great blessings of Baptism are mentioned: 1. It works forgiveness of sins; 2. it delivers from death and the devil; 3. it gives eternal salvation. It does this because of the words and promises of God: *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."* Mark 16, 16. How can we prove by these words that Holy Baptism also works forgiveness of sins and delivers from death and the devil? Christ merely says that he who believes and is baptized shall be *saved.* Remember, however, that there is no salvation where there is not forgiveness of sins and deliverance from death and the devil. *Salvation consists in forgiveness of sins and deliverance from death and the devil.* If Baptism gives us salvation, it must also work forgiveness of sins and deliver us from death and the devil.

3. *Baptism works forgiveness of sins. "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."* Acts 2, 38. How are we to understand this statement: Baptism works forgiveness of sins? Has not Christ Himself merited this heavenly gift? Christ, our

Savior, has indeed, by His sufferings and death, atoned for our sins; *He has redeemed us from all our sins and so indeed earned for us, for all men, forgiveness of sins.* But Holy Baptism is the *means* by which the Holy Ghost *makes the forgiveness* which Christ has earned for us *our own.* In baptism He presents to us and gives us this great blessing. The apostle says: *"Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."* Gal. 3, 26. 27. We are baptized *into Christ.* In baptism *we put on Christ* with all His merits. As in a beautiful, white, spotless garment we are clothed in baptism in the perfect righteousness Christ has merited for us. *Baptism works forgiveness by making Christ's righteousness our own.*

4. *Baptism delivers us from death and the devil.* By sin death came into the world; death is the wages of sin. In baptism our sins are washed away for Christ's sake, and in this way we are delivered from death. In our dying hour we do not really see death, but have eternal life. In death we rejoice: *"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? . . . But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."* 1 Cor. 15, 55—57. — Baptism works forgiveness of sin and therefore *delivers us from the devil.* When our sins have been washed away, the devil no longer has any power over us; we are free from hell and damnation. If Satan still tempts us to sin, we may, in the power of our baptism, resist him and gain the victory. — By working forgiveness of sin, by delivering us from death and the devil, *Baptism gives us eternal salvation. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."* Mark 16, 16.

5. To whom does Baptism give all this? It gives these things *"to all who believe this."* Our Savior says: *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."* Mark 16, 16. All those who believe, trusting in the promises God has given in His Word concerning Baptism, receive these heavenly gifts. It is true, Baptism *contains* all these precious gifts and blessings, *whether we believe or not.* They are *offered to all who*

are baptized. But we must take them and *make them our own.* This is done *by faith in Christ.* Baptism is *God's hand,* by means of which He hands down His gifts, forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and salvation. Faith is our *hand,* with which we take God's gifts and make them our own. — *During our whole life* we should remember our baptism and the grace God therein has bestowed upon us. Whenever we have sinned, we should in true repentance take refuge to our baptism, to the grace of God which He has promised us there. *"The covenant of My peace shall not be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."* Is. 54, 10.

REMEMBER: —

1. *Do not forget to thank your Father in heaven for your baptism. It makes you certain that His heavenly gifts, forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation, are indeed yours. It makes you certain that God is your Father and will remain your Father and you His child.*

2. *If you have sinned and grieved your heavenly Father, take refuge to your baptism. Trust to His unfaltering grace which He has promised you there. Believe in Christ, who is yours through Baptism, and you will be saved.*

MEMORIZE: —

Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Acts 2, 38.

Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Gal. 3, 26. 27.

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 15, 55—57.

QUESTIONS.

1. What three great benefits does Baptism give us? 2. Where did Christ Himself promise this? Mark 16, 16. 3. Prove that in these words of Christ forgiveness of sins and deliverance from death and the devil are included. 4. Which is the first benefit Holy Baptism gives us? 5. Who, indeed, has redeemed us from

all sins? 6. How, then, can we say that Baptism works forgiveness of sins? 7. Whom do we put on in baptism? 8. What does that mean? 9. How, therefore, does Baptism work forgiveness of sins? 10. Which is the second benefit of Baptism? 11. How does Baptism deliver us from death and the devil? 12. How does it give us eternal salvation? 13. To whom does Baptism give all these blessings? 14. Baptism is God's hand, by means of which He gives us all His gifts. Which is our hand with which we receive them? 15. How long should we remember our baptism? 16. When, especially, should it be our refuge?

LESSON 50.

The Lord's Supper.

What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, for us Christians to eat and to drink, instituted by Christ Himself.

What is the benefit of such eating and drinking?

That is shown us by these words, "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins"; namely, that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

1. You have often seen how on certain Sundays confirmed members of our church went up to the altar to receive bread and wine to eat and drink, while the minister said to them: "Take and eat; this is the true body of your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Take and drink; this is the true blood of your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." We call this sacred act the *Lord's Supper*, or the *Sacrament of the Altar*. *What does this sacred act mean?*

2. The holy evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and St. Paul the Apostle write about the Lord's Supper thus: *"Our Lord Jesus Christ,"* etc. The Lord's Supper was not instituted by men, by the Church, *but by Christ Himself*. Therefore it is a *sacred act*. The Lord instituted His Supper *"the same night in which He was betrayed,"* in the night be-

fore His sufferings and death. After He had given His disciples the bread and the cup, He added: *"This do in remembrance of Me."* The Lord *commanded* His disciples that after His ascension *they should do as He had done,* that they should take bread and wine, give thanks over them, and eat and drink in remembrance of Him. *He commanded His Church to celebrate His Supper to the end of days.* "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death *till He come."* 1 Cor. 11, 26.

3. In the night in which Jesus was betrayed by His disciple Judas, our Lord *took bread, and when He had given thanks, He brake it into small pieces, and gave it to His disciples, and said, Take and eat. After the same manner also He took the cup, filled it with wine, gave thanks, and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take, drink ye all of it.* The Lord took *bread and wine* and gave them to His disciples to eat and drink. We should do likewise in celebrating the Lord's Supper. We should take bread and wine, eat and drink both in remembrance of the Lord. As in Baptism the water, so in the Lord's Supper bread and wine are the external, visible means. The Lord's Supper is the bread and wine *comprehended in God's command.*

4. In the Lord's Supper bread and wine are also *connected with God's word.* While the disciples ate the bread and drank the wine, the Lord said to them, *"This is My body, which is given for you. This cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins."* These words of Christ we must also have in His Supper, together with the bread and wine. — In His Supper, under the bread and wine, our Lord gives us, according to His promise, *His body, which was given for us,* which was crucified, *and His true blood, which was shed for us on the cross for the remission of our sins.* Under and with the bread and wine we eat and drink the body and the blood of our Lord. We cannot understand how this is possible, but we *believe* it because our Lord has promised it. *"The Word of the Lord is right, and all His works are done in truth."* Ps. 33, 4. Our

Lord is the *almighty God,* who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think and can understand. Eph. 3, 20. The Lord's Supper, or the Sacrament of the Altar, *"is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, for us Christians to eat and to drink, instituted by Christ Himself."*

5. *What is the benefit of such eating and drinking?* Our Catechism answers: *"That is shown us by these words, 'Given and shed for you for the remission of sins.'"* In the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words. Our Lord, it is true, speaks only of remission, or forgiveness, of sins; but *where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation."*—In His Supper my Lord gives me, and I eat, His body, given for me, and He gives me, and I drink, His blood, shed for the remission of my sins. He gives me His body and blood, by the giving and shedding of which upon the cross He purchased and earned and procured for me the forgiveness of my sins. So the Lord's Supper *strengthens our faith in Christ,* our Redeemer. When we believe these words in the Sacrament, we have in it *forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.* How we ought to thank our Lord for making us so certain of our salvation in His Supper!

REMEMBER: —

1. *We have two Sacraments, two sacred acts, wherein our Lord, through visible, external means, connected with the word of God, offers and gives us His grace which Christ has merited.*

2. *Very many of those who call themselves Christians, and who are Christians, deny that in the Sacrament there is really Christ's true body and blood, because they cannot understand how this is possible. We firmly believe the plain and clear words of our true and almighty Savior.*

3. *Let us give thanks to the Lord, who has prepared for us such a wonderful means of grace to strengthen our faith in the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.*

MEMORIZE: —

The Word of the Lord is right, and all His works are done in truth. Ps. 33, 4.

As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come. 1 Cor. 11, 26.

QUESTIONS.

1. What do we call the second Sacrament of the Christian Church? 2. Who instituted this Sacrament? 3. When did Christ institute it? 4. Which words of Christ show that we also should do as He has done, and celebrate His Supper? 5. What are the external, visible means in this Sacrament? 6. What word of God is it with which bread and wine are connected? 7. What does Christ give us to eat and to drink under and with the bread and wine? 8. Why do we believe this to be true though we cannot understand it? 9. Why do we believe that Christ is able to do what He has promised in His Supper? 10. Which words of Christ show us the benefit of such eating and drinking? 11. What is given us, according to these words, in the Sacrament? 12. How do we prove that also life and salvation are given us in the Sacrament, although Christ speaks only of forgiveness of sins? 13. How does the Sacrament make us certain of forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation? 14. What is a Sacrament?

LESSON 51.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

REVIEW LESSON.

1. We have two Sacraments in our Church. What do we mean by a sacrament? By whom have the Sacraments been instituted? What has God ordained in the Sacraments to offer His grace? With what are these visible, external means connected? What does God offer and give through the external means connected with His word? What are the two Sacraments called?

2. Our first Sacrament is Baptism. How does our Catechism answer the question, "What is Baptism"? What is the external means in Baptism? What kind of water must we use when we baptize a person? If we have no water, we cannot baptize. But the water in Baptism is not simple,

common water; what, then, is it? — Baptism is the water comprehended in God's command. What command did Christ give His disciples before He ascended into heaven? Matt. 28, 19. Who, therefore, has instituted Baptism? Who, at the present time, ordinarily performs this sacred act? In which case can and should every Christian do it? Christ has commanded us to baptize? What does the word *baptize* mean? — Which is the word of God connected with the water in Baptism? We are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, in the name of the Triune God. God's name is God Himself. We are baptized in God Himself, in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. What does God bestow upon us in Baptism? God there gives us Himself as our true Father and accepts us as His dear children. Since the water of Baptism is connected with God's word and name, it is indeed not common water, but a gracious water of life. — Whom are we to baptize according to God's command? What is meant by the word *nations*? We make a distinction in baptizing adults and children. When do we baptize adults? We baptize our children in their infancy, when they are still babies, not able to be instructed in the Word of God. We instruct them in the doctrines of God's Word after they have been baptized, when they are able to understand and to learn the Word of God. What kind of schools do we Christians therefore establish? Which word of Christ induces us to baptize our little children? Mark 10, 14. To whom are our children brought in Baptism? What does the Holy Ghost kindle in them by Baptism? In Holy Baptism our children become God's children. Christ takes them up in His arms and blesses them.

3. Baptism is the water comprehended in God's command and connected with God's word. Baptism is indeed a great and wonderful institution. Why? What three great blessings of Baptism are mentioned in our Catechism? Where has Christ promised these three blessings? Mark 16, 16. Christ here only says that he that believeth and is baptized *shall be saved.* He mentions only salvation; how, then, can

we prove that Baptism also works forgiveness of sins and delivers from death and the devil? — Baptism works forgiveness of sins. Christ by His innocent sufferings and death has earned us this great gift, and yet we say that baptism works forgiveness of sins. What do we mean to say by this? By what means does the Holy Ghost make forgiveness of sins our own? What does the Apostle write Gal. 3, 26. 27? Whom do we put on in Baptism? What does this mean? By Baptism all the merits of Christ are imputed to us, His spotless righteousness is made our own. The second great blessing of Baptism is this, that it delivers us from death and from the devil. How did death come into this world? If Baptism works forgiveness of sins, from what must it deliver us? Baptism delivers us from the devil. How does Baptism deliver us from the devil? How does it give us salvation? To whom does Baptism give all these great things? What does our Lord say Mark 16, 16? It is true, Baptism offers all these heavenly gifts to us, whether we believe or not. But we must take and receive them by faith. As God offers all these things in Baptism, with what may we compare Holy Baptism as far as God is concerned? What is the hand with which we take all God's blessings which are offered in Baptism? We should remember our baptism during our whole life. When especially should we think of it? How long will God keep His promises?

4. Our second Sacrament is the Lord's Supper. What is it also called? By whom was it instituted? What does our Lord mean to say when He adds: "This do in remembrance of Me"? Christ wants His Sacrament to be celebrated in His Church till He again comes visibly on the Last Day. — What are the visible means in this Sacrament? What are we to do with the bread and wine? In the Lord's Supper as in baptism the visible means, bread and wine, are comprehended in God's command. — What is the word of God connected with the bread and wine? What does Christ give us in the Sacrament under bread and wine? We, indeed, cannot understand this, cannot see how it is possible. Why do we

nevertheless believe it to be true? Can Christ fulfil what He has promised us? Why? In which of His words of institution is the benefit of such eating and drinking shown? What is given us in the Sacrament through these words? We are given forgiveness of sins; what must be there also, where there is forgiveness of sins? What is especially strengthened in us when we partake of the Lord's Supper?

Lord, grant that we e'er pure retain
The catechismal doctrine plain
As Luther taught the heavenly truth
In simple words to tender youth.

That we Thy holy Law may know
And mourn our sin and all its woe,
And yet believe in Father, Son,
And Holy Spirit, Three in One.

That we on Thee, our Father, call,
Who canst and wilt give help to all;
That as Thy children we may live,
Whom Thou in Baptism didst receive.

That, if we fall, we rise again,
Repentingly confess our sin,
And take the Sacrament in faith; —
Amen. God grant a happy death!